

The Gospel

By Paris Reidhead*

Will you turn, please, to Revelation. Chapter 1. The First chapter of the Book of Revelation. Two weeks ago this evening, we started our study of Revelation. We saw the latter part of the 5th verse. Tonight I would like to have you relate the statement in the 5th verse with that made in the 6th verse. A tremendously important Scripture is before us. One that has the power to completely change your life and ministry. Hear it now, as I read. I will begin with the 4th verse. I think this will clarify the matter, and set it before us in its full dimension here.

“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God — from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own Blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:4-6).

I want you to notice the Gospel, for I believe we should always keep the Gospel clearly in mind, and see it in its full beauty and its full perfection. This is the Gospel. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own Blood.” Now we must ever preach the Gospel, but we must not stop with preaching the Gospel. We must preach the Word and declare the whole counsel of God. Everything in the Bible is true. It is all the Word of God, and yet it is not all Gospel. Some of it is Law. There is a great distinction between Law and Gospel. The Law is the revelation of the holiness of God. It is the revelation of the righteous demands of God upon morally responsible creatures. The Law is the yardstick by which men measure their conduct and their character, and find that they have come short of the standard that God has set. By the Law is the knowledge of sin. The Law’s purpose is to be the grappling hook God uses to strip us of our pretensions to self-righteousness. It is the Law that breaks us down, or breaks down all of our pride and reveals to us that we are in need of Salvation. It is the school master, indeed, which checks off our examination report, and proves we have failed. In other words, the purpose of the Law is to prepare for the Gospel, and tragically enough there seems to be grossly inadequate proclamation of Law, and therefore a grossly inadequate preparation for the Gospel.

But should I be speaking tonight to someone that knows that you are lost, and you have seen the holiness of God, and you have seen the justice of God, and you understand that, since God is holy and God is just, that the only thing that He can do consistent with His character with you is to exclude you from His presence, and send you to that penitentiary for moral criminals, the Bible calls Hell, —if you see that, and understand that, and you are prepared to take sides with God against yourself and consent that you deserve His wrath and His anger (In other words, if I am talking to a lost man, or a lost woman), I have good news for you. I have good news for bad people. God loved you, and Christ died for you. He took your place. He took to Himself the penalty of wrath that ought to have been poured upon you for your crimes, the sentence of death which was leveled against you; and the Lord Jesus died in your place instead. Now that is the Good News.

God’s wrath had leveled a spear at your heart You deserved it. The Lord Jesus never contested the fact that you deserved it. What He did was to step between you and the spear, and draw it into His own breast. Your spear. God says, He bent his arrows, bent his bow, because of your sins. And those arrows were aimed right at you. The Lord Jesus never argued. He knew that you deserved them. What He did was to step between you and the arrows, and draw those arrows into His own breast. The sword of God’s wrath has been sheathed in the heart of God’s Son. Christ died for you. Your sin has been paid; your debt has been settled; you may go to hell unsaved, but you cannot go unloved, because God loved you and gave His Son and His Son loved you and shed His Blood. You can go lost, but you cannot go unloved. God has seen to that. The debt of your sin has been paid. Jesus Christ died for you. Now this is the Gospel. Christ died for our sins, according to the Scripture, and was buried and was raised again the third day, according to the Scripture. Oh has the Gospel reached your heart. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us in His Blood.”

Nothing in my hands I bring. Simply to Thy Cross I cling. Now the grounds of your meeting God are the fact that you have nothing but sin, and He has everything you need. You come with your need, and God meets it. You come with your filthiness, and your uncleanness, and your crimes, hating them, turning from them to God, and He will cleanse you, and He will forgive you, and give you a new heart, and make you a new person. Oh I am so glad that I can preach the Gospel. Perhaps it would be wonderful if we could just confine ourselves to doing that. However, if “He gave evangelists and pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry,” we have to do more than that; because the Gospel is the grounds by which you come to Christ, but it is not the message by which you grow up in Christ (Eph. 4:11b-12a).

Now, if you have never been born again, this is the message for you. Christ died for your sins. But if you are a child of God, then this is the foundation upon which your Christian life rests, but you will not grow up into Christ by this message. This is the milk of the message, that Christ died for our sins, that loved us and washed us in His Blood. This is the milk. Now it is indispensable that we have that milk and drink deeply of it, for by it we live. But Paul said to one Church, he said, “When you ought to be eating strong meat you have need of milk; when you ought to be teaching others then you are not able” (Heb. 5:12). And so we have to go on, just as the text goes on.

You see the text. There is no period. If you look at verse 5, you will see that there is no period there. It is a comma. Not that the punctuation is inspired, but the message is. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” — Many people wish that the message stopped there. They would be happy if it stopped right there. Oh, they would just be so glad if we just preached the Gospel, just Sunday after Sunday, and service after service, preached the Gospel. But people would never go beyond it. They would never go beyond. They would never grow up in Christ. Now if “He gave evangelists, and pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry,” then we must go on. We must go on as we read in Hebrews 6 verse 1 “Go on unto maturity. Go on unto perfection. Go on to become full grown in Christ.” You see Paul, as we pointed out in messages — ministry in days past, did not want to preside over a playpen full of believers that were paralyzed in their spiritual infancy, and simply had been washed in His Blood and forgiven and pardoned, but never went on. He said, “Christ in you, the hope of glory, whom we preach, warning every man, teaching every man that we might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,” full grown in Christ (Col. 1:27b-28).

Now I realize we have a problem. A very real problem. I want you to turn back to Acts, the 2nd Chapter, with me for just a moment. And I want you to see again in this moment what happened to people who believed the Gospel so that they could go on to perfection. They could go on to maturity. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached. Two thousand people were pricked in their hearts, and said to Peter and the Brethren, “What must we do? Peter said, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Act. 2:37b-38). “And they that gladly received his word were baptized” (In verse 41): “and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” But look what happened. They did not go back to their apartments to sit all the time till the next Sunday. They did not go back to the dormitory to stay there all alone in the Godless educational Institution. Look what they did. See what happened. And you will understand why they came to maturity, and you will see the problem we are facing: “And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine.” (verse 42) They were not just taught once a week. Their lives were given over to learning. Do you see? Their lives were given over to learning. They were consumed with the desire to know.

Perhaps the only way we are ever going to see God get what He wants in the Church is to bring it back on somewhat the same basis the Communist Party now operates. When a person is, even a candidate to become a Communist, so I am told, and so I read...He is disciplined in his reading and his study, and is told how to use his time. Oh if I could I would love to put every one of you on a budget. Believe me you would read. You would read. You would not just buy the book and take it home, and just let it gather dust in some corner, and stack up between your bookends. You would read. And you would study. Oh, how I wish I had the authority and the influence with you to move upon you to give attendance to reading. Because by means of it, you are edified. By means of it, you are built up. “They continued in the Apostles’ doctrine” (Act. 2:42).

And then, they continued in fellowship. “Talking with one another, day after day.” I suppose they had work to do. I am sure that when they were saved, the harness maker did not close his shop. I do not suppose the brick man did not go to the kiln, I think he went. You know someone says, “It must be wonderful to be a Pastor. And you can give all your time to the study of

the Word.” What do you mean? Are not you acquainted with the facts of life? I have to work eight hours a day with things that have absolutely no bearing on study. They are related to the work of the Church. I have to spend as much time in things that have virtually no bearing on study as the person with an eight hour a day job. The study that I do has to come out of the nights, and the days. If I take five hours for study in the morning, you be sure of this – that it is 12:30 or 1 o’clock before I can get to bed at night. ...you say, “Well if you are a Pastor you just give yourself to study.” I wish it were so. That is what it was intended to be, you know. They gave deacons so that they could give themselves to attendance and prayer. The trouble is you cannot get deacons to do the way they did in the New Testament, or Elders to do the way they did. And so it falls back on the Pastor apparently. At any rate, my life is a little different from yours, the details, the responsibilities, the administration. Beloved, if you ever grow up into Christ, it is going to be because you give attendance to reading, and you give attendance to study, and you give attendance to meditation, and you give yourself to the Word of God, and you determine you are not going to go on as a baby in Christ.

It does not come easily. You know you can live all your life time on a College University Campus, push a broom down the halls, and never get a degree. They do not give you a degree for proximity to the Ivory Tower, Ivory Covered Towers. You have got to go in and discipline yourself with the work. And you can spend your lifetime here. You can have been here in the time that Dr. Simpson¹ was Pastor, and not missed a Sunday since, and not have grown in the things of God. Because your attendance here is only relatively valuable. It depends upon what you do afterwards. “They continued in the Apostles’ doctrine and in fellowship.”

How do you mean in fellowship? Continued in fellowship in the things of the Lord. Do you meet with other people, and talk about the things of the Lord? When you get with Christians, does your heart overflow with a deep longing to talk about Christ? That is what happened here. “They continued in the doctrine, and they continued in fellowship. And they continued in breaking of Bread.” They spend a lot of time visiting. Not gossiping. Visiting. Sharing in their homes. Being with one another. This was not only visit, but it was worship. Oh when your visit becomes worship, then it is profitable. The breaking of bread, you know, as we have said, was a common meal at the close of which they would break the Bread, and drink the Wine in observance of the Lord’s death. And they continued in prayer. Now we have got to do that.

John Wesley² had the pattern. Maybe the thing God (I have said this recently, and I am thinking more and more about it.) Maybe the thing we have got to do is to go back to the old Wesleyan Class Meeting. Just last year, I was able to get the entire works of Wesley, and I am reading them now with a fine tooth comb, trying to find out the genius of this thing that moved — that God used so, that changed the history of England. He would have a Class Meeting, and one of the godly men, most mature, and oldest in the Lord, would be appointed the Leader. And if people were not vitally interested in being part of the Class, and in seeking God, then they could not be in the Class Meeting. In other words, it was a privilege, not a right. And as the person was born again, he had to give evidence of a real interest in God; he was made part of the Class Meeting. And they worked out, John Wesley and those with him, worked out a series of questions, something like a catechism. They would meet together in a group, and the Leader would say, “Now, John, have you been praying? Well how did it go this week? How was your prayer life?” And they were all moving on to the thing that John Wesley called, Entire Sanctification. They were moving on to that state of being filled with the Spirit. And then they did not leave the Class Meeting when they were there. They went on to maturity. But the purpose of the Class Meeting was not just the Bible Study, but the purpose of the Class Meeting was to draw people on personally and individually into a normal relationship with Christ.

Now, some way we have got to bridge the gap between now and next Wednesday and Sunday. You go home, and you are going to be tired and weary tonight, and you are going to be busy in the morning. You will come back. You have your plans made for the week. I suppose it will be hard for you to squeeze an hour in for God between now and next Sunday. Our lives become so complicated so quickly. Now, let us suppose that God makes a tremendous impression on your heart tonight, and you leave here saying, “This is what God has for me.” What are you going to do about it tomorrow? You have found out where you are. You have found out your need. You have discovered what you must do. And you go home tonight and you say, “Yes,

1 Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919) founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance

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

God has put His finger on my problem. This is where I must meet Him.” But, tomorrow you are going to have to — getting up, you will oversleep your alarm by ten minutes... you have to hurry to get ready to go to work. And when you get back tomorrow evening, you have your plans made and you will be so tired. And you will say, “What was it yesterday? How? There was something I was going to do. What was it?” And by Wednesday you will have forgotten that you were at Church, and by — or at least have forgotten the Sermon. And by next Sunday, you will have forgotten which Sunday it was you were at Church that God spoke to your heart, because it will have been dissipated in the passage of time. Most Pastors have influence with their people two hours a week. And with many people, only one hour a week. And there are 168 hours in a week. Think of all the things that come from magazines, newspapers, radio, every means of communication, and then your conversations, and your work, and your thinking. All of these dissipating influences. So God makes an impression on your heart today, and unless you have fellowship with someone that is concerned about the same thing, it is soon going to be dissipated, going to evaporate.

And this is why you have been in the same spiritual state month after month, and even year after year. And there has not been the progress there ought to have been made, because we have not been able to bridge the gap between the impact and the impression, and the conviction and the creating of an atmosphere in which this can be brought into full development. Now I do not know the answer. It is complicated a hundred fold in New York. I do not know the answer, other than the fact that you become personally interested. Oh there are several things we could say. Speculate. Wild dreams. We could say, “Well, let us get us a great big apartment building here in the city, and everybody that is interested move into that. The rent we are paying somebody could buy it, and then we will have Bible Classes morning, afternoon, and evening.” Well, that is a lovely idea, only the trouble with it is that it won’t work. And probably if it did work, it would not be good. Because it would coagulate the Christians in one place, and rob them of the influence that they ought to have, scattered throughout the city. So that does not seem very practical.

And then we could say, “Well, we will have District Meetings, and those that are interested will meet in a District.” The only trouble about it is that that is hard to do. I think it comes down to this, that you begin in earnest. And when you are in earnest, you are going to do something about it. I wish somebody would come to me and say, “Pastor, I know you cannot probably come, but is there not somebody in this Congregation that is mature enough in the Lord that he could meet with a group of us one night every two weeks in a home, and we could talk about these things and go on, because we have just been going on and on listening and listening, and we have not come to the place of really gripping this thing.” That would be marvelous. Well, you have got to do it. It has got to be done. In other words, “Unto Him that loved us and washed us in His blood” — is marvelous. That is a wonderful place of beginning. The only place of beginning. But for too many it is the place of ending. And it should not be.

You say, “I am forgiven. I am pardoned.” Yes. But now notice the Text. Back to Revelation, Chapter 1 verse 5. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us in His Blood.” This makes me a child of God. This puts me in the family of God. This relates me to Him. Every parent looks down in the face of that little wee one that is in his hands, so small, and looks at the child, and says, “Well isn’t this lovely. Here is a life.” But...Are you content that the life should remain this way? No! Is God content to have you well born? No! He says, “He gave evangelists, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of those saints into the work of the ministry, until we all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13). And He wants you to grow up into Christ. “Unto Him that loved us, washed us from our sins in His Blood,” and... Now we come to something further.

And hath made us (in His Sovereign purpose He has made us. In His condescending love, He has provided room for us. More than providing room, God has geared His work to you. It is all very well and good for somebody to say, “We do not like cheap clap trap. We do not like shallow things. We want something real.” Do you know the cost of having something real? It is a lot easier to have something shallow. Believe me. And the trouble with me was I grew up on it, and was weaned on it, if I can use the word. And I know how to give it to you shallow. I could give you. But somehow about ten years ago God did something in my heart, and created an allergy to it, and I just cannot bring myself to it any more. It either has to be real, or I am not interested. But I want to tell you something. It costs to have things real. It costs. At least, when it is shallow you can have something big. But when you start for something real, well it is just hard. It is costly. You see, as long as you keep a cross on a hill, and people sitting in the pew, looking at a cross on the hill, and they say, “Well, that is where Jesus died. Is not that wonderful. My sins are under the Blood.” Then you can live any way, and go anyway, and be any kind of a person you want,

and do it all getting a preacher that is going to do it all for you, and their whole job is just to bring people to him. It is all well and good. But it is all on the level of milk. It is all on the level of the first floor. But the moment you say, "Wait a minute. There is not only a Cross on a Hill, but there is a Cross for your heart." And you cannot be what God wants you to be until you let the Cross come into your heart. Not only a Cross for Christ, but a Cross for you. Not only that He died for you, but you died with Him. You have got another matter. The Cross gets to be mighty cutting. It comes to the place where it is a tremendously expensive thing to go on in this way. And so when you start for something real, you have got to be prepared to pay the price. Not just to believe that there is a Cross. You see, there again you come to the easy believism. It's terribly to have an easy believism in respect to salvation, deadly, destroying. Multitudes will miss Heaven because of it. But you know, it is a terrible thing to have an easy believism in respect to the deeper life.

I had a conversation recently with someone. We both had the same background. We had grown up in an area, in a church community that had the deeper life message, and ministry, and had the Altar, and gave invitations to the Altar. And we both had the same reaction. People, preachers would preach on the necessity of entire sanctification, being filled with the Spirit, and invite people to the Altar. Now when they came to the Altar they had to do something. They had to say something. Well, they would say, "Well, now look. Take it by faith." And so the person would take it by faith, and go away. Now one of two things. If they had something well and good. If they met God, good. But if they had not met God, if they had not entered into the experience of the fullness of Christ, they had gone through the formula. They had taken it by faith. Now one of two things. They either had to lie and say, "I didn't get anything. It didn't work." Or, they had to say, "I did." When really they didn't, which was a lie. So they were in a terrible place. And the moment that I set up a formula for you in respect to union with Christ in death, and the fullness of the Spirit, I have made it easy for you to slip out into another side. I have put a fence and a stile. And you climb over the stile and you are in. But the tragedy of it is, you can get people that have climbed over the stile of your formula, that have not actually met God. And have not been filled with the Spirit. And the consequence of that is that you have just moved your problem from one side of the fence to the other. And so to say, "Now here it is." You have got to meet God. You have got to meet Him alone. You ought to meet together to talk and to pray and to think and to let these things come to a boil in your heart, until you really come to a point. It is costly. It is terribly costly. It costs your time. It costs your interest. It costs your prayers. Your convenience. But it leads to reality.

Now, everything in the Christian life is postulated on, First, Being washed in His Blood. Being born again. But you see it does not begin there. It also is postulated on coming to the Cross, and dying there with Christ. But it does not stop there. It also is postulated on being filled with the Spirit. Christ taking up His lasting dwelling place in your heart through faith.

Let me bring you back to Israel. Remember where we were last year. Coming across the Red Sea is what you have here at the Gospel; They were redeemed by Blood. The blood on the lintel, on the doorpost, redeemed by the Hand of God. The Red Sea stands for forgiveness and pardon, deliverance from the wrath of God. But the wilderness stands for the state into which the Christian comes when he is born again. And intermediate state, at state where there is a war between two natures, where the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, where there is murmuring and, complaining, and lusting on the one hand, and then great desire for God on the other. And this speaks of the wilderness experience.

Now, unfortunately, we as Pastors have been under tremendous pressure to gear all of Church life to wilderness Christians. But this is not where God put us. You see, God said that you get blessing when you go into the land, when you go through Jordan, which speaks of death with Christ, and into the land, which speaks of being filled with the fullness of God. Then you are in the place of blessing.

But you remember what happened to some of them. They were willing to come through the Red Sea, but when they came up to Kadesh-Barnea they turned and went back. And then you remember what happened. Korah, with 250 of the elders and the men of renown and the famous men in the congregation, came to Moses and Aaron, and challenged Aaron, saying, Aaron, you are taking too much to yourself. You are saying the only ones that can possibly minister in the Temple are the ones that are of your family, Levites, and of your family. And, Aaron, you are taking too much to yourself. We ought to do it.

And this is exactly the state of the Church, where people are to minister in the Church on the basis of being forgiven, instead of on the basis of where the whole of the Church is placed, on the other side of Jordan. But you say, "Aaron had not gone over Jordan yet." But he had in type. Because Aaron and all that were authorized to serve in the Tabernacle were those that had the Blood on the great toe, on the thumb and on the ear, which speaks of death with Christ. And on the Blood had been placed the oil, which speaks of the fullness of the Spirit. No one was permitted to work in the Tabernacle, offering incense before the Lord, sacrifice before the Lord, unless he had been anointed with the Blood and with the Oil. And thus the picture is there.

Now, here you are. You have been washed in His Blood. You have been born again. If you have not, then this is the invitation to you. Let me ask you. Have you come to the Red Sea? Have you entered in? Have you gone into the Land? For this verse — He has made us kings and priests — is a ministry of Canaan. It is a ministry on the far side of Jordan. It is a ministry that God intended for every believer. Every believer. Some years ago now — four years ago. It is hard to talk. You become a tradition so soon. That is the trouble. Dr. Tozer³ and I were talking when he was here in October. He said, you know, my trouble is, people say, "Ah, that is just Tozer." He has written again. There it is. It is a terrible thing when you become a tradition. I understand they are saying the same thing about me now here and there: Oh that is just Reidhead. You have been with him too long. But the fact is, truth is truth. And it does not make any difference whether my parrot says it. It is still true. And this is what we have got to face. And here it is.

Everything in the Church is postulated on a person's being brought into union with Christ in death and resurrection, and the fullness of the Spirit. In other words, let me put it this way. And I speak for myself. I think I have more to lose than most of you do. Fourteen years of ministry as a Pastor and a Missionary, before I knew anything of the Cross and union with Christ in death, or anything of the fullness of the Spirit, and when I look back on those fourteen years, I am absolutely convinced that before God they are nothing but ashes. People were helped. And I am glad for that. But as far as the Glory of Christ is concerned, and my own rejoicing of having something to lay at His Feet is concerned, I believe in that day there will be nothing but ashes. Everything that God ever does through a man he does through a man that has entered into union with Christ in death and resurrection, and is filled with the Spirit of God. It is the basic minimum for service. Not to be in His family, but for service.

All right. Now the question with you is first, Are you under the Blood. Are you back there under the lintel? "Unto Him that loved us and washed us in His Blood." Are you there? Have you come through the Red Sea? Do you have the witness of the Spirit that you are born again? The next question is, Is the Cross real in your life? Are you filled with the Spirit? Now I am talking to you that say, "Yes, I am under the Blood. I know that. And I am at Jordan's banks, but I need help to go in and to get over." These things have got to become real in my life. You are the ones that I am saying ought to get together with your Bible, you ought to read, you ought to study, you ought to pray; give attendance to reading the Word that God is going to be able to make the truth in your heart. You know sometimes I think of sowing seed in a seed bed that is pulverized and fertilized, and powdered, and the seed is under the ground about an inch. But it is so dry it lays there one month, two months, six months, a year, two years, three years, four years, and that seed never germinates for want of moisture and sun light.

Now what does God want to do? God wants to bring you into maturity. God wants to make you a mature Christian. What will your ministry be when you are. Do you remember some time ago the first year I was here, I gave you the outline on the hand. And I talked to you about the ministry of the Spirit-filled Christian from the hand. Some of you were not here. I will give it to you. Some of you will be reminded by it. The thumb which touches all the fingers was the Ministry of the Fruit Filled Life, the fruit of the Spirit, without which nothing is profitable. Love, joy, peace. The fruit of the Spirit. Here it is. Against which all other ministries have strength. Then this was the ministry of Authority. Excuse me. The ministry of Intercession. This was the ministry of Ambassadorship. The Ministry of Authority and the Ministry of the Gifts of the Spirit. The Five-fold Ministry of the Spirit filled believer. And tonight when we read in these words, "Hath made us kings and priests unto God," we are talking about this Ministry, the Ministry of Intercession and this Ministry, the Ministry of Authority (Rev. 1:6). Two of the five ministries that are set forth in the Word. They are not all set forth here. But they are all set forth in the Word.

³ Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) Pastor and Author. Christian and Missionary Alliance

Now what ministry do you have? I am speaking to you that are washed in His Blood. Do you have the fruit of the Spirit? Could you say there is much fruit? If you are in Christ, you have some fruit. But much fruit? Very patient. Very kind. This is the ministry of the fruit filled life. But it is only possible by being filled with the fullness of God — a normal Christian. Then, what is this? Ministry of Intercession. “He hath made us priests unto God.” I would like to have you turn, so that you can see it and relate it to what we are saying, to I Peter 2:9, and see there the kind of Church He wants, and the kind of Church that is going to show forth the praises of Him which called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. Here He describes it: “But ye are a chosen generation, (you are) a royal priesthood.” A royal priesthood. You see the joining of those two words? King, priest. Royal priest. You are a royal priesthood, “a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light:” “Unto Him who loved us, washed us from our sins, in His own Blood, and hath made us to be kings and priests unto God” (Rev. 1:5-6a). A royal priesthood.

Now, because of Judah’s, back in the children of Jacob, sons of Jacob, you remember it was Judah that tried to sell Joseph. He was the leader in selling Joseph to the slave traders who took him into Egypt. He was the one who originated the plot to get rid of him. But remember it was Judah that said to Joseph down in Egypt when Joseph insisted on taking Benjamin, unknown—not yet revealed to his brethren, he said, If you take my younger brother, Benjamin, you will kill my father. You will break his heart. And I promised my father that I would bring Benjamin back, and I entreat you to let me be your slave or take my life, but spare my brother. This is the same Judah that said, Oh sell him and get some money out of it. Don’t just kill him. God has done a work in his heart. So now, from that time on, Judah is the one from whom the King must come, because of his intercession with Joseph on behalf of Benjamin. And this was Joseph’s test, to see whether Judah’s heart had actually changed, before he would reveal himself to his brothers. I think that it would have gone hard for them if Judah had said, Okay. Well we got rid of one. We will get rid of another. But, no. Something had happened in Judah, and so out of Judah the King should come. Not out of Levi. Now the Levitical priesthood was priests, but they never could be kings. So it was out of Judah that our Lord came, but He was a King and a priest. But it did not say He was a priest after the order of Levi. He was a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Now I do not think anyone can tell you who Melchizedek was. Personally, and you cannot make me prove this. I would like to. It would help a lot. But I cannot. I think Melchizedek was Job. And you say, “Why?” Well, Job was the oldest Book of the Bible, and I think that Melchizedek was Job, but maybe nobody else does. I am probably wrong. It does not make much difference anyway. But the fact is, there was a man by the name of Melchizedek that met Abraham. And Abraham recognized him for what he was, a King of Salem, and a Priest of the Most High God. And he combined two ministries. King and Priest. So in Hebrews we read that the Lord Jesus Christ was a Priest after the order of Melchizedek...

Now, you remember what it says, that we are joint heirs with Christ. Now what does that mean? That means that when you were placed in the Father’s family by adoption, in the Father’s household, given His Name, you were heir to everything to which Christ was heir, for you were a joint heir. And that means that you, too, had a ministry after the order of Melchizedek, a King and a Priest. Not after Levi, but after Melchizedek.

Now we can get an illustration of both of these things from Moses, though Moses was of Levi, but he functioned nevertheless as a King over Israel in many respects, though he was not king as such. Let us go back and see Moses now as a Priest, and get some little insight in just a moment as to what it will mean for you to be made priest.

You remember when Israel sinned, Moses who was one of Israel, one of their number, kinsman to them, went into the presence of God, and pled with God on behalf of Israel, and said, Lord spare Israel. Think of the shame it will be when it gets back to Egypt that you took your people out into the wilderness to destroy them. You might as well have left them down in Egypt. And the intercession of Moses turned back the wrath of God, moved God to minister in justice and in love, and moved Him to minister also to the hearts of the people of Israel.

We have the pattern. Moses was a kinsman, and he represented his people. So it says, He has washed us in His Blood and made us priests. Wherein does this ministry begin to work? In behalf of your unsaved loved ones. Your unsaved neighbors and friends are under the dominion of Satan. They are controlled by the god of this world. They are blinded by the god of this

world. They are in the grip of Satan. They walk according to the course of the world. When He has made you to be a priest. He has made you to be a representative. Now when you are filled with the Spirit of God, you know which one you are to exercise this ministry. You know the one. You cannot do it for everyone. There must be a selection. Now which one. And this is where the Spirit of God alone can guide you. But here is someone that you meet in your office (In your office, or in your home, or where you have some connection, some point of contact) — and God burdens your heart for this person. They are just as rebellious and blind and dead as anything can be. Now you are to have the ministry of a priest. What is it? You see, you are kinsman to that person. They are no worse than you would have been. I do not care what they have done. You could have done it. You are their kinsman, and you are their priest.

Now what does it involve? It involves going into the presence of God on behalf of this person, and that God has laid upon your heart, to intercede for them, to take their place before God, to acknowledge their sins, to confess the justice of God's wrath, to accept the penalty for that person, and yet to plead, to intercede. You are the legal representative of the sinner, and your plea will be something like this: "Oh God. He has sinned. He deserves your wrath. He deserves your anger. He deserves judgment. But he is no worse than I am." Now of course I am over simplifying it. I am simply trying to illustrate it, not tell you what to pray. I am simply illustrating the principle. Lord, he deserves your wrath, but so did I. He deserves your anger, but so did I. He does not deserve your mercy. Neither did I. And yet Christ died for me, and I have come to Him, and put my faith in Him, and have been cleansed by His Blood, and I am pleading for him. Oh, God, awaken him to his need. And your intercession now releases God to begin to work in that sinner's heart. God only works in grace, where the sinner asks for it, or where the sinner's representative asks for it. And the reason that there are so few people being saved, is because there are so few people that are genuinely performing the ministry as a priest, interceding.

Now I would like to take just about a week with you on this. I think I have given you enough insight so that you can see something of what it means when you legally represent that sinner before God. You release God to begin to work. But that is only part of the picture. There is another picture. You have released God to begin to work by your intercession, but that person is still in the grip of Satan, still blinded by the god of this world. Now you come to the other phase of this ministry. He has not only made us priests. He has made us kings and priests. What is the purpose of a king? To exercise authority. Well, whose authority do you exercise? The One who has appointed you to be a king. And who made you to be a king? King Jesus. And why did He make you to be a king? To exercise His authority where He put you. King Herod exercised authority for Caesar, not his own, but Caesar's.

And so it is that when you come into an understanding of this ministry as a king, then you recognize the nature of what you will do. What will it be? Well, you have interceded. This releases the Lord to work. Now you have another situation. You have got the Satan blinding the eyes, and shrouding the heart, and enveloping the spirit, and smothering with the death smother of darkness. And you want to see that person brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. So there is a second ministry.

The first is for God on behalf of the sinner. Now the second is toward Satan. And the authority that He gives us is not over people. You have no authority over the person, but God has entrusted to His church authority over principalities and over powers. And in behalf of that unsaved loved one, we can plead in this fashion, Father in the Name of Jesus Christ we stand against every tie that a defeated foe has placed around this mind and spirit and will, for the release of this heart from all of the blinding bondage into which the person has been brought. And when you once see this ministry, and the responsibility to exercise the ministry as a king, then you realize that you are beginning to come to the place where you are laboring together with God. It is not just giving out a tract. It is not just giving the Gospel. But our ministry is a full ministry, a developed ministry. And it is this toward which my heart is laboring with you, and yearning for you.

Why if there were just as many people as there are here that had been washed in His Blood, had experienced the Cross and its cutting edge, and were slain by it, were filled with the Spirit of God, were hungry to become mature Christians with a full ministry, if no more than there are in this room tonight — Do you know what would happen. If God could get this many people that meant business with Him, and would go down with Him so that they could go up with Him, the world could be turned upside down. John Wesley said, "Give me two hundred men that hate only sin, and fear only God and I will turn the world upside down, for Christ."

Now here you are. There is a ministry. He loved us. He washed us in His Blood. He made us kings and priests. Have you gone on to that? Do you understand the fruit of the Spirit? Do you understand this? Do you want to understand it? Will you go on with God into this mature relationship where your ministry is not just in the flesh, not just in personality, not just in enthusiasm, but in the full provision of Grace? in the full ministry? Ministry of intercession, ministry of authority are but two. "Unto Him that loved us, washed us in His Blood."

Oh how I long to see you go on, want us all to go on together until we shall come to the place where God has a people that He can truly use to show forth the resurrection splendor and glory and power of Christ. Well what can I say tonight? What invitation can I give? I am closing. I am through. What invitation can I give? You are unsaved, I invite you to come to Christ, and know the sweet peace the cleansing Blood brings. If you are a Christian, I am exhorting you, and entreating you to get in earnest. Give yourselves up to the reading of the Scripture, and the study of the Word. I'll tell you something. If you will, God will meet you. He will meet you. And I think you can sit here, and I can preach before you every Sunday for the next twenty years, and if you do not get in earnest all you will do is memorize what I am saying, and won't have profited from it. Oh dear heart that you will go on, until these things become real in your life. I do not know any other ministry adequate for a city like New York, except the ministry for people that have come to the place where they are normal Christians. Now I want you to be one of them. I want to be one of them in a hundred fold more than I have ever experienced. I am not saying I am on a pinnacle. Come up where I am. I am saying this is God's Word. Let's go on together until we enter into everything God has for us, become the kind of people God can use. Our weapons are not to be carnal, fleshly, but to be mighty to the tearing down of strongholds. You say, "Well, why has not this been done?" There is only one reason. It is being done where God can find a man. Get that little booklet, "The Authority of the Intercessor⁴", off the shelf. I have urged you to buy it. Read it. You will see what God did with someone who understood the ministry of king and of priest. Get the "Authority of the Intercessor", and "The Authority of the Believer⁴". It is wonderful to see what the Lord can do.

Well, bless your hearts, my heart aches for us. Oh how I want us to become the vehicle of God's blessing. I wish I could just get you so excited about the things of God that night and day you would just have to give your time to it. Why not? What else is as important? You know if you died tonight, how much of what you did last week really counted for anything anyhow. I think we ought to live every week in the light that we could die, in the light of the fact that we could die Saturday night. It might change where we put our time and our strengths, and our energy and our effort. I do not think we would be dilatory. If you only had a month to live, I think you would say, "Oh God, I want my life to count for eternity." The only way it can count is for you to be a normal Christian, filled with the fullness of God, equipped with a whole ministry that He has for us. Let us go on, Brethren. Let us go on unto perfection. God on unto maturity. That is the word.

Well, bless you. Let us pray: It is wonderful for us to contemplate what Thou hast done for them that love Thee, but our Father here we are in the midst of the greatest Missionary challenge the world has today. And, oh Lord, how little is really being done to show forth the glory of the Risen Christ. How little. We are like children with our little buckets that are filling them with sand, and piling them up and the shore is so immense. Father, art Thou not adequate for a place like New York? Art Thou not enough? We see the Apostle Paul saying, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum. Do it again, our God. Do it again. Find a people. We want to be part of it. Lord, if we are so indifferent, indolent, careless, that we are not willing to pay the price to be part of your new thing, part of a people that are wholly Yours, then Lord bi-pass us and get to them somewhere, but get a people that are willing to be normal Christians, go down into death that they can come up in triumphant life, embrace the Cross that they can know the victory of the empty tomb. God, Father of our Lord Jesus, Thy dear Son deserves a people that love Him with their whole heart, and will die for Him, and live for Him, and allow Him to live through them. We believe some of that people are here tonight. And we are asking Thee, Lord, that Thou wilt just build a fire of excitement and anticipation, and concern and burden under their hearts until they will be so intoxicated with the Lord Jesus Christ and so consumed with all that He has purposed for them, that everything else loses its tang and its taste, and the things of heaven and eternity become of paramount importance. Now, Father, we believe that Thou hast here some. Oh just a hand full, maybe a company, but, Lord, there are some here that mean business with Thee. Now may the words of exhortation have

⁴ Rev. J. A. MacMillan Author of "The Authority of the Intercessor", 1942.

found root in their hearts, and spring up and grow, and bring forth fruit to the glory of Christ. And oh, God our Father, we pray for that unsaved man that is here. We ask Thee to just speak to his heart. (And before we conclude the prayer, I want to ask you if you would like to be included. Are you here tonight and would say by your upraised hand, Yes pray for me. I am lost. I want someone to pray for me. I want to be born again. Would you put your hand up? Anyone? Yes, thank you. God bless you. I see it. If you would say, we would be so glad to talk to you. Is there anyone else? All right.) Now, Father, we thank Thee for this hand that has been raised, and the heart behind it, and we ask that the Holy Ghost will speak and bring this one into glorious liberty and deliverance tonight. Tonight. And bless every Christian. Do something so wonderful this week that when we come together next week it will be different because we are different. And we will give Thee all the praise, in the worthy Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Let us stand for the Benediction.

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle, New York City, NY, Sunday evening November 13, 1960, by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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