

Are we willing to drink His cup?

~Other Speakers M-R: Leonard Ravenhill:

Luke chapter 12, verses 49 and 50.

I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

I've been going to meetings for over seventy years all over the world—Pentecostal conferences, Methodist conferences, all kinds of conferences.

I heard the baptism of the Holy Spirit preached, I think, fifty different ways.

In seventy years, I've never heard anybody preach on this text where Jesus, speaking of Himself says: "I have a baptism..."

Charles Wesley gave us that lovely children's hymn.

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild.

Look upon the little child.

Some people never get past "gentle Jesus." But Jesus is associated with fire. The next time He comes, says 2 Thes. 1:7, He's coming with flaming angels—thousands of them!

Here He is saying to these disciples, "I am come to send fire on the earth..."

Again, the symbol of the church is fire. I was preaching last Sunday night in a big church with a big cross for Jesus and one for the thieves. I reminded them: "The cross is no symbol of Christianity. The symbol of Christianity is the tongue of fire that sat on the head of each of them."

Our God is a consuming fire.

Wesley has a wonderful hymn on this. He says,

See how a great a flame aspires, kindled by a spark of grace.

Jesus love the nations fires; sets the kingdoms all ablaze.

To bring fire on earth He came, kindled in some hearts it is.

Oh that all might catch the flame; all partake the glorious bliss.

When He first the work began, small and feeble was its flame.

Now the word doeth swiftly run; now it wins its widening way.

More and more it spreads and grows, ever mighty to prevail.

Sin's strongholds it now o'throws and shakes the trembling gates of hell.

Sons of God, your Savior praise; He the door hath opened wide.

He hath given the word of grace; Jesus' word is glorified.

Saw you not the cloud arise, little as a human hand?

Now it spreads along the skies, hangs o'er all the thirsty land.

You see the idea: a spark begins and gradually it blossoms to go out through the whole world. Wesley wrote that in 1776, I think, and prophetically.

More and more it spreads and grows, ever mighty to prevail.

Usually with the expansion of a thing there is a weakening, but when the Church truly expands, there is a strengthening.

God never planned any failures for us.

...how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

Now I want to bear this out from the gospel according to Matthew 20:17-22.

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And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask...

She asked a big thing. In the other gospels it says that they asked it—John and his brother asked. Here it says his mother asked. I guess there was a collusion in this. They had agreed together. They believed that Jesus was going to have a kingdom. They wanted to sit on the right hand and the left hand when He came into His kingdom.

But notice they came worshipping Him.

Yet in their worship there was begging.

It wasn't pure. They had an ulterior motive.

They were trying to bargain with Him.

But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? (v 22)

Now, in Luke 12:49 He said, "I am come to send fire on the earth." What hindered Him from giving them the fire at that moment?

A baptism.

A baptism of sorrow.

A baptism of anguish.

A baptism that we call Gethsemane.

You see, there is no place in the whole wide world where you can put the Upper Room before the Cross. The Cross comes before the Upper Room, but we try to turn that around.

Very often we're asking people to tarry in the Upper Room who have never knelt at the Cross. They get a false experience and it evaporates. We shun the Cross.

"I have a baptism to be baptized with. But I want you to receive a fire that will change that degraded will of yours.

It will endue you with power.

It will give you energy.

It will give you life."

He says, "I want to do that, but I am straitened. I wish it could be accomplished, but it cannot be done yet."

There are people who think that God is only around to help us. We have a great utility God, they think. You pray, and He does this! You pray, and He does that! You pray, and He sends you money. You pray, and He gets you out of a jam. He's not somebody you worship in speechless adoration, but He's a utility God! And some on TV are exploiting that to the maximum.

Let's go back to Matthew 20.

What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. (v 21,22)

So, He took them at their word.

"I want my sons to enter thy kingdom, sitting on thy right hand and on thy left." There is only one way to enter the kingdom: through death.

You know not what ye ask. Are ye able...? Yea, we can drink the cup.
All right, lady— I wonder if she was living when her son was brutally put to death? And James, the brother of John, was killed with the sword. (Acts 12:2)

It was Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, a terrible butcher. A man who could be linked up with Pharaoh that liquidated all the Israeli babies in Egypt—an ancient Hitler. Jeremiah had more conflict than any other prophet of old. Immediately when he was raised up he was in conflict. He was in conflict when he was dying. What was the secret of his power? It is very obvious; he states it: "Thy fire burned within my heart. While I mused the fire burned." Do you know that forty one times he mentions fire? They put him in a pit, but it didn't burn the fire out of him.

There is a hymn with a verse that says:

Waters cannot quench it, floods can never drown
Substance cannot buy it, love's a priceless crown.
Oh, the wondrous story, mystery divine
I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.

The fire is unquenchable.

The fire of hell is unquenchable.
The fire of the Holy Ghost is unquenchable.

I know there is a lot of opposition against the second blessing. I challenge you to find a man that has made history in God's kingdom who somewhere didn't have a second crisis after he was born again in the Spirit of God.

One of the Quakers said he found something in him that wouldn't keep peace. He wanted to get rid of the thing in him that was always troubling him.
William Booth said, "I found that I ebbed and flowed until one day the Holy Ghost came in his fullness." Then he wrote that marvelous battle hymn that today's church doesn't know.

The Salvation Army was a penniless organization that went into seventy countries in ninety years. Not seventy cities, but seventy countries! Men and women left their castles in England. Professors left their professions. Why? Because they could see that fire as clearly as Israel could see that pillar of fire at night. The Holy Ghost was there! And old William had them going down the streets at night marching and singing:

Thou Christ, the burning cleansing flame, send the fire!
Thy blood-bought gift today we claim, send the fire!
Look down and see this waiting host
Give us the promised Holy Ghost
We want another Pentecost.

I'm not sure we want it. We need it! You see, the thing between where you are now and this baptism of fire is a "cup."

Jesus said to her,

Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the

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baptism that I am baptized with?

He'd been baptized in the Jordan, but He wasn't talking about that. The man who introduced Him to the world said, "I baptize you with water." That baptism was external. When He comes He will do something internal. He'll baptize you—the literal Greek says—"with Holy Ghost fire", not "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." You can't separate them. God is a consuming fire.

He shall baptize you with Holy Ghost fire.
But you see, there is something between here and there.

The Church never had more equipment that she has now, but she

Never had less power!
Never less anointing.
Never less of the miraculous.
Never less from the omnipotent God.

As I've said before,

When did you last tip toe out of church Sunday morning
breathless, awed by the awesomeness of God's majesty?
God's glory? God's omnipotence?
"Ye know not what ye ask." I wonder how often God says that to us.

As I've said many times, and I say privately in my prayers, I don't want to get to the judgment seat with maybe trillions of eyes looking on me, seeing me come up for trial and have God say to me in that day, "Son, I had many things to tell you, but you couldn't bear them."
When are we going to get serious about being serious about revival?

Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

What's the cup?

Skip to chapter 26 of Matthew. Here's the baptism for you.

And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. (Matt 26:39-42)

What was the cup?
Well, I'll tell you one ingredient it had: It had betrayal in it.
The men who had sworn allegiance to Him, when it came to a crisis, quit.
Can He drink of the cup? What's in the cup?

I believe in that cup there was

Internal suffering,
Mental suffering, and
Spiritual suffering.

Do you want to drink the cup?
I am straightened, He says. I cannot do anything now. There is a baptism through which I have to go.

The Holy Ghost cannot come down until I go up.
I cannot go up until I have done the will of the Father.

And so He goes through the agony of Gethsemane. He goes through the lonesomeness. He drank of that cup.

I say it was internal because in Isaiah 53:11 it says He travailed. Isn't that internal? Deserted by others in the darkest hour, not only by men, but by God.

Can you drink of that cup?

Do you want to travail?

You see, what people are seeking today is a painless Pentecost.

There isn't such a thing.

What happened immediately after Pentecost? They prospered—yes? No! -- They went to jail! It wasn't prosperity; it was prison, pain, privation, and persecution.

Jesus goes on to say in Matt 6:19,

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

There are a lot of wealthy Christians that will get to heaven bankrupt. And there are a lot of Christians who are almost bankrupt, living in poverty, who will be super-millionaires when they get into eternity.

We read elsewhere that if you're going to follow the Lord, it means division in the family. Your father and mother will hate you. Jesus came to the place where his brothers said, "He's insane."

People say, "I want to be like Jesus." Well, I doubt it.

Do you want to get kicked out of your family because you love God?

Do you want to be so true to God that a Thomas comes and doubts you?

That a Judas sells you?

Do you really want to be like Jesus?

Well then, why don't you practice it?

Why don't you have forty days and forty nights of fasting?

Forget all the paperwork. We make such rash vows when the temperature is running high in a meeting.

I say, the pain was internal.

He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. (Isa 53:11)

I'm sure it was not only internal, it was also mental pain. I'm sure it was bodily pain. It says in Isaiah 50:6, "I gave my back to the smiters." We don't do that. We fight back. We don't like somebody to carve us up, scorn us, ridicule us, humiliate us, misrepresent us. He got the whole works! Yet He never muttered once. When it came to the agony of the cross it says that men shot out the lip. "If God's Your Father, then let Him deliver You."

I say again, the perennial challenge to a Christian, is "Come down from the cross and save yourself." You made a decision in a missionary meeting: "I'm going to give more money to missions." Then something came up and you backed off.

"I'm going to spend more time with God." You didn't do it.

Before Elijah called down the fire, he rebuilt the old altar.

We don't want to go back to old altars, to old vows, to old commitments.

We always try to make new things.

God knows they'll be brought down in a few weeks!

Christianity has not been weighed in the balances and found wanting. It's being tried, found difficult, and rejected!

It's too tough. There's no part-time service. "Leave all and follow me."

I was going down the street in Oldham, which is nine miles outside of Manchester. I was in my early twenties. I pastored the largest church in town; in fact, the largest Holiness church in England. I was going down the street one day. As I passed a house, the lady opened the door,

"Hi! You're the pastor at the Tabernacle. I often come to your church. I sit on the back seat. I'm very poor. I can't give anything in the offering, but I want to do something for you. Would you come into my house and drink a

cup of tea?"

Well, usually, of course, I want tea, so I said, "Yes." I went in, and boy! did that house smell. I got in there and she had finger nails clogged up with dirt. The kitchen sink was filled with dirty dishes.

There was a plate with some old bacon covered with mold.

That fuzzy horrid looking stuff.

She reached into the kitchen sink to a stack of cups and picked one. You know, the tea had dried on the outside. Oh, mercy on us! It looked as though it had about a hundred bugs at the bottom: dried, dirty, rotten old tea leaves. In fact, some were moldy.

"Well, now" she said, "I'm going to get you a cup of tea."

I said, "All right."

She poured the tea into the cup. It was as black as my shoes, and I don't like black tea.

"Do you take cream?" "Yes." "Well, I have none."

"Do you take sugar?" "Yes." "I have none."

With that dirty hand shaking, I saw the black stuff that was supposed to be tea, cold as ice.

I hesitated. I felt like tipping it up. But I knew I was on trial.

She held the cup up, "Drink it!"

As she handed me that cup of dirty tea, my mind went 2000 miles away to a place called Gethsemane, 2000 years back. The Father gave a cup of all the dregs of impurity and wickedness. He didn't give it to Gabriel. He didn't give it to Michael the Archangel. He gave it to his Son!

This is what He's come to do. He's come to consume iniquity. He's going to do it in the Garden of Gethsemane—by Himself, when everybody has betrayed Him, when His nerves are down, and He can hear the enemy coming! He's thinking of all the years He's demonstrated His power, shown that He was the Son of God. He's walked on the water. He's raised the dead. He's cleansed the leper. He's healed insane people. And they didn't believe on Him!

So what's the difference today? Do we believe on Him?

Remember that there wasn't one of the twelve disciples that had a Bible. Not even the Apostle Paul had one. Don't boast too much about your Bible knowledge. It's going to face us at the Judgment Seat.

I don't have a big library, but I have a few nice books. I wonder sometimes, will these books rise up in judgment against me?

I say with all my heart, we're looking for a painless Pentecost.

We want to invest a dime and get a million dollars back.

Can you drink of the cup? "We are able," and so they drank, and were crucified.

Today it is considered sadistic if you even say that people have to take up their cross. "Don't tell young people about the cross—they'll be discouraged." Are you suggesting that Jesus wasn't smart? "If you're going to be my disciple, kiss the world goodbye." You see, when people are born again these days, they don't get separated from the world. Most likely their pastor is the most worldly guy around! But if you're going to get what He wants to give, if you're going to get the true baptism of the Spirit, you have to drink of that cup.

They said, "We are able." And He said, "You shall drink indeed of that cup, and be baptized of the baptism that I am baptized with, but to sit on my right hand and my left is not mine to give. The Father is going to do that." Verse 24 says that when the other ten disciples were around listening they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

Now He rubs their noses in the dust. "You're looking to sit on My right hand and My left in My Kingdom." He could have said, "Are you prepared to go through Hell to get there?"...You can't show me a revival in history that hasn't been born of travail, pain, loneliness, and dark weary nights.

In Scotland, nine miles out of Glasgow, there's a great big house, a national memorial to David Livingstone. In it there is a model that shows the room where he died, where for years and years he prayed. It's like some of those houses in India that are made of bamboo and leaves woven in. And there he is, kneeling over a bed, if you can call it that—two bamboo rods with some leaves on it—and a candle flickering there. They said every night he would kneel at that bed and you would hear him crying with his hands raised, "God, when will the wound of this world's sin be healed?"

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He fought the Portuguese slave traders. He did many, many marvelous things. Why? Because he had a Gethsemane of his own. His precious wife died and he buried her in the jungle. And the baby she bore died. He buried the child at the side of its mother. Another child he had died—he buried that one.

But the grief didn't change his zeal for God. It added fuel to the fire. "The devil's trying to rob me. The devil's trying to hinder me." And he worked with greater zeal. He prayed more than ever he had prayed. They said that night after night his voice would echo through the forest, "Oh God, when will the wound of this world's sin be healed?"

Dear God! all our pastors are concerned about is adding one or two members! Or getting another bus to bring the people in! I say again, there can be no revival without travail.

"...I want my son to sit on thy right hand..." Well, here's His answer.

And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant (Matt 20:24-27)

Well, that's a switch, isn't it? They wanted to sit on his right hand. He said, "The way into My kingdom is:

If you want to go up, you must go down.

If you exalt yourself, I'll abase you.

Be abased, and I will exalt you.

Save you life, you'll lose it.

Lose you life, you'll save it." It's reverse logic.

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,

but to minister, and to give his life... (verse 28)

Not to give His theology; not to declare, "I have a mandate from the Father to instruct you."

He gave them all He had.

He gave them the Sermon on the Mount.

He gave them evidence that He had dominion over sin, death, disease, and devils, and everything.

And yet, they were unbelieving!

"I'm straightened. I'm tied up. I can't do anything yet." That's what He said in Luke 12. "I have no release. I have a baptism to be baptized with. Before that word of John that startled you when he said, "When he comes, he'll baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire...", but he didn't do that. Not immediately. He said, "I have to go through the Father's will. The Father's will is Gethsemane. The Father's will is the Cross. The Father's will is that I go down into the depths, lead captivity captive, and give gifts unto men."

As I said, there are two great reasons we don't have revival.

We're content to live without it,

It's too costly.

We don't want God to disrupt our status quo.

The Christian life can only be lived one way, and that's God's way. And

God's way is that I leave all and follow Him.

God's way is that, in that hour when I think I am going to have joy or something, suddenly that cup turns into a cup of bitterness. When I think I've "arrived" at something, the Lord shuts that.

We think, "If I had the privileges of Mrs. So-and-so, I'd be a real saint."

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (vs 27-28)

I was reading a couple of pages in the Marechales life yesterday. I like to turn to that book. She was the oldest daughter of the founder of the Salvation Army. Even when she was 85 years of age she could preach up a storm.

"One night," she said, "I went to Brussels. I went to a large mansion loaded with antiques and costly things. It was beautiful. It was owned by a Christian. I noticed a sweet girl there, at about 9 o'clock each morning she would come out of the servant's quarters radiant. I said to her one day,

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'My dearie, I want to ask you a question. I've noticed the last few mornings while having my breakfast, after coming out of your servant's quarters, you are so radiant!'

She replied, 'I begin at 5 o'clock in the morning.'

'5 o'clock?! To what time?'

'Well, breakfast is at 8. Usually I have the last fire going by about half past 7.'

'How do you do it?'

'I just kneel in front of it. I sweep all the ashes on one side. I put them in a bucket. I get some paper and some kindling wood.' (And boy, getting coal to catch fire is a job!) 'I go in that room and get that fire going. I go in the next, I go to the next. I go back and the first one's gone out, so I do it over again. But eventually I get to breakfast a minute or two before 8 o'clock. I've lit my 12 fires.'

'Don't you get impatient?'

'No.'

'Well, you say the fires have gone out?'

'Yes, they often go out.'

'Well, do you get up early for devotions?'

'No,' she said, 'Not very early.'

'Well, how do you maintain you spiritual life?'

She said, 'Every time I light a fire, I say, Jesus, while I'm kindling this fire, kindle a fire in me!'

Kindle a fire of Your love afresh in me this morning!

Kindle a fire of Your devotion in me!

Here's this precious little girl talking to one of the most powerful women in the world. A woman who, at 21 years of age, went to Paris and turned the city upside-down preaching to all the prostitutes. The queen of the underworld was there. Men came from the Sorbone, the greatest intellectuals with their long beards and their pipes, and listened to her.

And yet the Marechale said that young lady taught me more than most sermons I'd ever heard.

She had to light the fire, get bellows, blow the things up and try to get them going. She said, "At every fire place, I never missed one morning saying, 'Lord as I'm kindling this fire, kindle Your fire in me.'" The fire of love for Your will. The fire of love. The fire of joy. The fire of peace. The fire of compassion.

If this fire came back to the Church, we'd turn America upside-down in six months.

Ours is all theology. We get a starving man and give him a cookbook. Does it help him? He looks in the cookbook and sees there a dish with potatoes, beef, etc. What do you do? You tantalize him! You say, "Oh, I hope one day you can come to our place We're going to have this dish, this beef, this turkey, and something else." And yet the poor man is ravenously hungry! We give him a picture, but we don't give him the goods! At the average church on Sunday morning, they give you the menu, but they never give you the meal. They give an outline of theology: 'This is our precious doctrine.'" So, most people will be reciting doctrine in Hell.

As I've said before, if you say "where two or three are gathered in His name....," if the living Christ is in your meeting, how in God's name can you have a dead service?! It's totally impossible?

I remember talking once in Carnegie Hall with Miss Kuhlman. We were talking about the Church, as it is, and various other things. She said, "I talked with some young students the other day. They said,

'We go to a certain church. We have a wonderful pastor, and a marvelous choir, and he's a great teacher, but nothing ever happens. We come to see your meeting and there's a power of God there.'

I was in meetings there where billows of power went over the place!

All kinds of miracles were done.

'What does the pastor say?' He says, 'Well, of course, where two or three are gathered, He's in the midst...' Do you know what I said to them? 'Well, if He's in the midst, and you believe that He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, why doesn't He do in the midst 'here' what He did in the midst 'there'?'

We try and bail God out! The pastor has been to a seminary (or as I say, a cemetery). Our pulpits are full of dead men preaching dead sermons to dead people. But there's going to come an awakening.

God Almighty doesn't care if He sends America bankruptcy. He doesn't care if we have to stand in bread lines. He doesn't care if our automobiles rust because we have no gasoline. That could happen very easily.

But again, you see, it is so "expensive." We have to more than believe in the Lord. We have to believe on the Lord. We have to more than have a blessing just because we feel better, we feel inflated, or we maybe get a gift or something.

You know, I've found that when someone gets a gift of the Spirit, they're more proud after they get the gift than they were before.

They're proud of the gift!

The indwelling of the Holy Ghost, to me, is the most majestic thing this side of eternity.

The Holy Ghost produces holy people. Holy people live holy lives, producing holy fathers and mothers

So here's a question. Answer it for yourself.

Do you want to drink the cup that He drank of?

Between here and there is a Gethsemane, a cross.

There was a young man in 1904, in a town called Newcastle-Emlyn, Wales. He had about 35 people in the meeting. He put his big hands up and prayed "Bend us, Lord, and then break us." Bend us. Bend the Church. Break the Church.

One night in a crowded meeting, with more than 1200 people, suddenly God came upon him. The writer puts it very beautifully, I think, though terribly. That great preacher who had been captivating crowds and turning cities on fire had a public Gethsemane.

He suddenly crumbled to the ground, as though somebody had squashed him downwards. It wasn't a spectacle. It wasn't a demonstration. It was a personal visitation of the Holy Ghost. He writhed. He groaned. He travailed. Some men at the front said, "Let's go help him." And somebody else said, "Don't put a finger on him."

When he got up his face was transformed as though he needed a veil over it. From there he moved into a new sphere of power, a new sphere of authority.

We're not going to gather people together and cause them to repent. Only God can do that.

Read again Joel 2 today. We quote it so often "He's going to pour out his Spirit on all flesh..." But wait a minute! The price is tremendous: Lay all night between the altar and the doorpost. I'd love to see a couple dozen preachers who would get together and lay between the altar and the doorpost, two nights a week, for the next three weeks, with the Holy Ghost coming upon them. Not "speaking in tongues" in the sense that so many people think, but speaking with a tongue we've never heard: speaking of travailing.

What you've got in Romans 8 is beyond language.

It cannot be uttered.

It's God the Holy Ghost groaning through us.

It groaned in Jesus so that He travailed. Are you going to suggest that He didn't groan? Of course, He groaned at Gethsemane.

I believe that Jesus, right now, is groaning in heaven. If He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, don't you think he groans over the Church as it is today?

Poor, misbegotten thing that it is?

Powerless, lifeless, without authority?

Most of our people can't keep victory themselves, never mind cast out devils.

We can't pull down strongholds.

But I'm convinced that it is going to come. There's going to be a great turnaround. It won't be inside the denominations, as far as I'm concerned. Oh it's nice to read Hebrews 13:12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify...", that is, "purify, edify, release, transform." That He might do that, "he suffered without the gate." But the next verse says, "Let us go with him outside the camp." Let's be cut off from everything that is organized, manmade, and supervised.

People say, "Ravenhill is a radical. You shouldn't take any note of him. You know, he has no covering." Well, I didn't know that. Poor me! I've been going around the world for the last fifty years without a covering! I didn't know! But the Lord knew I had it, so He kept me. Who was John the Baptist's covering? People knew when John the Baptist came. He did no signs, no wonders, no miracles. But when he spoke, the words were like fire. They burned in the hearts of the people. If a thing doesn't burn in me, why, in God's name, should it burn in you?! I wouldn't listen to a preacher who didn't kindle something in my heart.

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You see, I backed away from that rotten cup that woman had. Then forcibly she said, "Drink it." At that moment I remembered a man in a garden saying, "Father, this is the most degrading thing in the history of the world. If it's possible, please..." The Lord let Him do it. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him.

When it pleases the Lord to bruise you, what do you do? Ring for help? Phone for somebody? Call the church? Or do you get alone with Him Who alone is able to heal? With Him Who alone has the balm of Gilead?

You see, God isn't training Boy Scouts. He's training soldiers!
No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. (2 Tim 2:4)

There's a smart advertisement that you see on television and other places. You see these smart boys, these cadets: "We're looking for a few choice men." Come and be one of the specials. That's exactly what God does. "I have chosen you and ordained you," so you don't need any other ordination.

Out of the twelve He chooses three: Peter, James, and John.

People say that you shouldn't be selective. God is selective.
He always was. He always will be.

Out of the three he chose one. God has a process of elimination. He doesn't ask you to drink a cup a week or a month after you're saved, but you gradually move into that area where you realize that this is what He's after.

He's after me going to the cross!
And not just to go to it, but to get on it!
"Oh, I'm glad He died for me." Have you died for Him? Isn't that a fair exchange?

I remember when I was little boy that they announced that an American was coming. He had just written a hymn that was, I think, one of the sweetest hymns ever written, and he played it for us that night.

Out of the ivory palaces and into a world of woe
Only his great eternal love made my Savior go.

Out of the ivory...angels bowed down, and seraphim bowed...and men spit on Him
He had all the glory of heaven, but He had no where to sleep at night... It would take eternity to unveil to us what it meant for Jesus to come. He drank:

A cup of separation from His Father,
A cup of separation from the glory in eternity,
A cup of separation from the worship
because it says in Hebrew that angels are commissioned to worship
Him; men didn't worship Him—they spit on Him!
He laid it all aside joyfully. He took up a cross to be battered and bloodied.

I love that hymn, My Faith Looks Up to Thee. It was written in the old North Church in Boston Common. (I preached there once, and I had them sing that hymn.) The second stanza says:

May thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As thou hast died for me,
So may my love to thee,
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire!

Suppose God were as fickle in His attitude to you as you were to Him? What would happen? The little servant girl says, "I'm on my knees two and a half hours every morning. Every time I strike that match, I say, 'Lord, as I kindle this fire, kindle Your fire in my heart, the fire of Your Spirit, oh God!' I've been here for years. I must have lit hundreds and hundreds of fires."

She wasn't at the table serving meals with all the celebrities. She's up at the crack of dawn. She's carrying a heavy bucket of coal. She's cleaning up the dirt. It's a ritual most people wouldn't have. But she's turned it into

Are we willing to drink His cup?

a sacrament! She's turned the tables on the devil! When he says, "Well, you could be praying. You could do more than that."

She says, "I would bow there some days. I would just worship. I would see the flames go up and think of the sacrifice that has been made. No, don't pity me. I've got a wonderful job! They pay me to have my devotions! They pay me to sustain my prayer life!" I wish we had a lot more people like that.

Look out. He might bring you up this week and ask you drink of the cup "Can you share my baptism?"

"My baptism is a baptism of sorrow;
a baptism of desertion,
a baptism of pain,
a baptism of loneliness,
a baptism of darkness."
It's all combined.

Well, can you drink it? Or do we try to make some excuses? All He's asking for is obedience. Obedience is the key to everything.

This is serious business. Time is running out fast for all of us.

The greatest revival that swept America wasn't staged. It wasn't advertised. It wasn't financially backed. It didn't have broken down film stars and ex-footballers. It was in the ordinary course of a meeting, when Jonathan Edwards preached his sermon, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." There was nobody advertised. There was nobody projected.

Jesus says, "How can you receive blessing of God when you receive honor one of another?"

"He resisteth the proud and saveth such as are contrite and of a broken spirit."

There are many who say, "Come down from the cross and save yourself." If you see somebody else saving his neck, and you follow him, you will lose your blessing. You will lose your reward. You will lose your power.

Nobody stood by Jesus.
Maybe nobody will stand by you.
It's a lonely life, but it's a glorious life.

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