

## **198114 returnofthelordjesus2 alrees**

Sharon and Robin, I'll never forget your sensitivity immediately before the message, because I recognize that on the hundreds of occasions that I've preached in other places, sometimes there has been a message in song that's totally unrelated, and consequently it's very difficult to stand up and make the transition. It takes a long time, but when you finish singing, I always have the feeling that I could go to my knees in prayer and really wait in the Lord, because yours is more than just an entertainment, it's a real ministry to the glory of God and to our brother also in his ministry. Dr. Frederick W. Robertson introduced the two-point sermon.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon introduced the seven-point sermon, and last night I introduced the one-point sermon. Well, this morning I introduced the 42-point sermon, and I was reminded very thoroughly when I got back over the dining hall by some very, very close individuals that I've known for the last 35 or 40 years that it was rather a lengthy time, and I'll apologize for that and say that tomorrow morning I'll cut down to the length of the tape. I was 64 minutes this morning and the tape's only 60 minutes, so I'll try and even be shorter than that.

This is going to be an interesting evening because last night was a very interesting night. Hearts were moved, I'm sure, by the Spirit of God as the Word of the Lord came to us concerning the triumphant, visible, personal, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Tonight, as we look to the Word of the Lord, I'd like to go on from there, and particularly as a devotional, take 1 John chapter 3 and just reading the first three verses of 1 John chapter 3. Let's remember that the proclamation of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is one of the greatest incentives to soul winning that we know.

It is also a greater incentive to purity because we are living in the light of the fact that someday we shall be brought into account for the deeds done in the flesh. It is also a time of great rejoicing because we're not rejoicing that spirits are subject unto us but rather that our names are written in heaven, and it is at that time that we shall have a real confirmation. It's a time of anticipation as we remember our reunion with loved ones.

So behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knoweth Him not because it knew Him not. And beloved, now are we the sons of God.

And it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him. For we shall see Him as He is, and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure. In Pickering, Ontario, there's a wife of a very dear pastor who five years ago received word from the doctor that she's suffering from a terminal illness.

She has lost many pounds. She is now just about 60 pounds. Two or three individuals have to move her in case the bones of her body will be broken.

She is going through a time of difficulty because she's paralyzed from the waist down. And

what a glorious time it will be when she will say that we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And this is the glorious hope of the believer.

Last evening when the message was introduced, I mentioned that I was going to preach on the visible bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we discussed the subject last night, I suppose until 15 minutes to 12 or 12 o'clock, naturally many, many questions arise out of such a message. And I would like to really make it very clear tonight that there are details concerning the second coming of Jesus Christ and attending events that we could very easily preach about.

For instance, we could preach about the five judgments and the various aspects of judgment. We could certainly preach about the great period of the Millennium. We could share and preach together concerning what will happen to those who are not in Christ Jesus.

We could talk about what is known as the Parousia, the rapture of the Church. And that word was altogether missing last night because I was not talking about the details that attend this event of the great last days. I was talking about the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes I've heard believers say that the rapture is really the great event. Actually, the rapture is only an incident in the final unfolding of the events. The rapture may be God's grace to the Church.

When I look at the rapture, it may bring to me a great deal of personal satisfaction that I will not go through troubles or difficulties, that I'll be delivered from the pain of a tribulation. But that isn't the point of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The real fact tonight that we must look to is that He is going to bring a climax to all events.

There are other ways that we could talk about the last days. I was brought up in a period of time where I believed that when a person died, they went immediately to the streets of gold and the gates of pearl. And I was taught that grandmother would have her arms stretched out to welcome me.

But finally it dawned on me that grandmother is a disembodied spirit, that she hasn't received her body. And then I began looking at Revelation chapter 21, and I realized that the place that is described as heaven, and that's in verse 2 of Revelation 21, that holy city, the city square of the New Jerusalem, comes down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and that that New Jerusalem is going to rest upon a renovated earth. And it is to that New Jerusalem, the streets of gold, the gates of pearl, the crystal rivers, that I'll enter.

But I'm not going to enter until that time. The Lord very clearly told us where we would be with Him when He spoke to the thief in the cross. He said, you're going to be with me in paradise.

And I personally believe that at the death of Jesus Christ, He descended into the innermost parts of the earth, as comes in the confession of the Apostles' Creed, and that it was transferred from there into the presence of God, which is now known as the place of paradise. And then, as I go back to Revelation chapter 20, verses 14 and 15, I used to preach that when a person died,

that sometimes they would be immediately cast into the lake of fire and into the place that is burning. And I soon realized that if that were going to happen, you would have to take a man out of hell, judge him, and put him back into hell again.

And so therefore, the Lord very clearly tells us that there's a place called Hades, and it's reserved in the innermost parts of the earth for those who don't know the Lord Jesus Christ. It's no doubt a place of conscious suffering, but there's going to be a time, according to Revelation 20, 14, that death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire, and this is the second death. So no one tonight is in the New Jerusalem, and no one is in the lake of fire.

You are either in a place called paradise or a place called Hades of conscious suffering or conscious joy. Now let me get me, Mr. Superintendent, into more trouble than last night. But nevertheless, what I'm pointing out is that there are a thousand things that can be talked about.

But we're talking now about the preceding events that should cause us to remember that the spirit of Antichrist is already here, and that we are living in a period or an age that is fast moving toward the last-time events, and that we are going to ultimately see all of these events usher in the personal, visible, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so I mentioned on the first point last night that we wanted to present our concept of a clean biblical theology. The second thing I'd like to do tonight is talk about the confused state of the church.

Now I'm not going to speak on the matters of the ecumenical movement, because I could become an ecumaniac doing that, but what I would like to do is speak about the theme of the confused state of the church in this context, where individuals are saying, we are the last generation before the Lord's return. Generation approximately 25 years. So this has resulted in claiming that we do not need to concern ourselves about the future.

Now let me mention a few books. I go to my library and I have many, many, many books, some good, some not so good. I've gone through three libraries, left two of them over in India, and just a few years ago began building another library.

But if I went to the second coming section, I would certainly pick out the book by Dwight D. Pentecost on last things. I would most certainly pick out some of the great theology books that I have, whether it's by Ralston or strong. And then I would go to some of the books on the second coming or on the rapture of the church.

Some written by Salem Kerbin entitled guide to survival, countdown to rapture, or else I would go to John Kettle's book, footnotes on the future or how Lindsay's liberation of the planet earth, the late great planet earth by how Lindsay and the terminal generation by Dave Wilkerson. And all of them are presenting somewhat an undermining theory to the church. I hear a strange silence now.

Oh, how can you hear a strange silence? I sense a strange silence. And this is what I think is

happening. The books may be entirely right.

There comes a cloud of despair and we say things are getting bad. And rather than waiting for the cleansed bridegroom theory and the theory of the dynamic church, we say no revival, no hope, all is lost. What in the world can happen in our time? Clouds of despair.

But when I look statistically at the events of the church of Jesus Christ, I'm totally elated when I realized that the continent of Africa at the turn of the century was the dark continent. And at the turn of the next century, if the Lord tarries, it could be one of the greatest Christian nations in the world. When I look to Latin America and recognize that we had a handful of Christians.

And today we have the dynamic dynamic of certain men like Lewis Plow coming to North America and going into Scotland to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. I'm totally amazed at what's happening in churches that have a membership of twenty, twenty five and thirty thousand. And today many of us are quoting our Latin American brothers as being the authority of scripture.

I mentioned the other night that in the year 1967, there were few cross-cultural missionaries in India. And today there may be close to 2000 who proclaim the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. It's also produced another theory called the watch the clock theory.

And one dear brother describes it as this way, as prophecy is unfolding, not to see the bridegroom or to bring about purity, but with the idea that we will sit somewhere on a lonely hill or we will find ourselves in a cave in Australia. And there's a group there tonight in an underground cave. And we will watch the clock and hope to the Lord's name that he will soon pull the trap door and this miserable generation will go down into oblivion.

And that's known as the watch the clock. And so rather than have a growing awareness of purity, we have a growing awareness of a terrible disaster taking place and men's hearts are failing them for fear. You say, well, what does this produce? It's produced a certain thinking among people.

And let me show you how it's happened in the church. We begin to say, first of all, don't worry, young man, about taking a college preparation because Jesus is coming. And when I entered the ministry, a very dear brother said to me, Alf, whatever you do, don't go back and go on to seminary because this is the last generation before the coming of Christ.

Do whatever you can. And when you have finished the work, I am sure you will be glad that you didn't waste your time in college. I've also heard this.

Don't go into a new building program in the light of the second coming of Christ. We ought not to build now because it's too costly. And just a few years ago, brethren were warning us, whatever you do, don't embarrass the testimony of the church of Christ by borrowing a lot of money to build.

Because what will the bank managers think of you when you leave all of these bills behind at the time of the rapture? I said, brother, I hope it takes place in front of the bank and I'll go out shouting. Thank you, sir. And I know our dear bank manager is here tonight and he's among the ones that will go.

So he also is not worried. And then the thought there's no sense in long term training leadership of gifted leadership, no long term goals for the church. And you say, where does this date back to? It dates back to the year eleven hundred and to the time of the Crusaders.

And you recall, we sing one of the Crusaders hymns entitled Fairest Lord Jesus, ruler of all nature. And they were besieged and overwhelmed by the hostile Turks. And they believe that this was the Battle of Armageddon.

And every one of the Crusaders died looking up, just confident that Jesus would break the skies and come back again. You may say, what in the world have you become, a cynic? No, I'm concerned. I am concerned tonight that body, soul and spirit we give ourselves unreservedly for the work of the kingdom.

We need to work as though Jesus will never come back. But we need to be in a relationship of purity that we believe in the imminency of the return of Christ that he'll come back tonight. And so I've lived long enough to have heard this, that Adolf Hitler was the as the Antichrist, Benito Mussolini, Fidel Castro, Stalin, Kissinger and the Ayatollah Khomeini, all of them the Antichrist.

And this kind of a brief fleeting ministry will never build the church and it will never fulfill Luke chapter 19 and verse 13, which is this occupy work until I come. And oh, I wish tonight that God would speak to us as a body. And I've mentioned this to Mr. Sloss many times.

It is my settled opinion that the missionary church should gather together at camp meeting in order that the Holy Spirit can minister to the entire body, for there is no greater place for us to receive encouragement than to be able to go back to a local church and put some of these things into action. So my theory concerning the second coming of Jesus Christ is this no matter what, if he should come now or if he should come a hundred years from now, I want to work till Jesus comes. And my friend, I believe enough that when the last person to make up the body of Christ has walked down the aisle and given his or her life to the Lord Jesus, that at that moment he will break through the skies and there'll be the sound of the last trump.

And I'm also confident of this, that whatever I have to go through before the second coming of Jesus Christ, that he will give me his grace to go through it. And I am sorry to say that many, many of the films that depict the second coming of Jesus Christ are giving all of the horrors of what could happen in periods of time, but they are minimizing the grace of God to any person that suffers. And we must always remember that.

Although we need to see the pictures and they're a real pleasure. Let's take the last point, the conflict of the age. And I say last point, you know, it doesn't mean much, but it's the last point

anyway.

The conflict of the age is this, that we recognize our enemy and much more so as the day approaches and we must come to grips with the things that we are doing. And I would want to suggest to you that our Lord laid out the battle plan when he spoke to the 70 disciples and he sent them out two by two. And I realized that this is not in the context of the book of Revelation.

So if you'd like to go back with me to the book of Luke chapter 10, as the Lord appointed the 70, I want to go through at least five or six things that I consider to be the conflict of the ages, the battle of the time. What is the battle plan for the believer? I hope that every young man who aspires to the ministry has read a Bruce's book entitled the training of the 12, just a very tremendous book. And you'll find a good deal of Luke chapter 10 in there.

What are some of the guidelines for the battle? What can I expect until the day Jesus Christ returns? What is the conflict of the age? What must I be aware of as a believer? And in case there's a visitor here tonight by a believer, I mean an individual who has fully cast himself upon the Lord has made an admission that he was born with his back to God and desires to come back to God and knows that there's no other way but through the cross and that Jesus Christ has taken his sins past, present and future upon himself. And that putting your hand in the hand of the Lord and recognizing him as savior, he'll give you the victory to live for him. And you can become a trusted believer in the man on the cross and walk with him.

And I hope that some will come to that tonight. But first of all, we go back to Luke chapter 10 and verse two, the Lord says in the battle of the ages, remember there will always be a shortage of workers for the kingdom. And there will always be a shortage of dedicated workers.

I was talking with Harold Fickett on one occasion of the Van Nuys Baptist church in Van Nuys, California. Dr. Fickett, who is no longer there, said this. When I began my church and I had 100 people, I thought, how happy I'll be when I get 500 people because there'll never be a shortage of workers.

Sometimes people look to large churches and they say, why doesn't that church split so that they can supply the workers for another church? But I have news for you. And so as Dr. Fickett, he finally had 8000 members and he still had a shortage of workers. People upon whom you can depend, humble workers, workers who will love and work for the Lord Jesus Christ, workers who are not so interested in projecting themselves as they are projecting the master.

It's very hard to find people who do not become weary and well-doing and give up on the task halfway through. I believe that we should be like a scientist on a research for cancer or formerly for tuberculosis or smallpox, to be able to work over that microscope and in the research lab day and night and day and night to say, I am just ready to make a breakthrough and at any time it will happen. And I think that this is the attitude of the Christian worker.

Any time there'll be a breakthrough. But instead of that, he said unto them, the harvest truly is

great, but the laborers are few. And how do you get laborers for the kingdom? Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.

That's the recruitment program. It's not taking the list of all the people and saying, well, he only has one job and she only has two jobs. And I've heard people say about individuals that come into the church.

Who do they think they are? Freeloaders. Why they're not even willing to take a job in the church. There may be something wrong with the way that it's stirred up.

If you want to have workers, pray them into the kingdom. I wish to God that all of us could have the attitude that such men as Billy Graham have. I have a very good friend in whose church I preached a few times and held a series of meetings.

And his name is Reverend Herman Bronlin. Reverend Bronlin, as we call him, is 73 years old and has been pastor of a church for 53 years. When Billy Graham was just beginning his ministry, invited Billy Graham in to preach in his church.

And Billy Graham stayed in a house at a certain families. Herman Bronlin said, and he's at the Hawthorne Bible church in Hawthorne, New Jersey. I went down to the greater New York crusade and we were having a banquet to welcome the workers.

And he said, I sat at the head table and I looked down the line and there was Billy Graham sitting. And he said, I didn't know if he'd remember me, but he looked up the way and said, Herman, how are you? It's grand to see you. He said, Herman, do you remember the day that I preached in your church? He said, I felt like saying, do I remember the day? And then he said, do you remember the family I stayed with? And Mr. Bronlin said, yes, that was the Berkeley family.

And Billy Graham said, would you please give my love to the Berkeley's? I haven't seen them all of these years. I slept in their house. He said, Herman, do you think they'll remember me? Mark of humility.

Herman says, remember you, they wouldn't let anyone sleep in that bed after you left. That's the way that God needs to supply the workers today. Then let's notice Luke chapter 10 and verse three, go your ways.

Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. And I like to put it this way, that I send you as a lamb to face the wolf. And this means that we are facing and will always face a period of terrible spiritual assault, both by wicked men and by demons who will oppose us.

And you have to learn the difference between the work of demons and the work of those who sometimes are Satan's instruments in the flock. I asked the dear brother in this area, you happen to be a sheep farmer said, could you tell me how you know the difference between a wolf getting into the sheep fold and a dog? And he said, yes, it's very simple. He said, if a wolf

gets in there, a wolf goes directly for the heart and rips the heart out and does not eat the flesh.

But he said, if it's a dog, a dog will go in and tear and rip the sheep apart. And I thought, isn't that what Paul was saying to the church, beware of the dogs, beware of concision, beware of evil workers. And we understand that Satan's work is not simply to rip apart and possibly to maim you, but the work of Satan is to get to the heart of things and destroy the heart of the matter.

And so therefore, when Satan works among us, I recognize tonight that there's one thing that Satan cannot do. Satan cannot possess a bloodwashed believer. Satan cannot get through the blood of Christ.

It is a bulwark. It is like an impenetrable wall. It is a fortress.

My God in him will I trust. But I want to know this tonight, that Satan can oppress the believer and there can be some satanic obsession, but not satanic possession. And many, many of the believers that I meet, I'm sure on the campgrounds have been obsessed by certain things such as fear, failure.

I am sure that there are those who have been obsessed by the idea of death, of separation. There are believers who are obsessed with the idea of loneliness. What will happen if my children die? My husband dies and I'm left all alone.

And then Satan can oppress us. And sometimes he does that through illness, through imaginary thoughts. Sometimes he can do it by discouragement.

He can do it by an over-dependency on a friend and a friend can be removed. And you may ask, well, what is the ministry of camp meeting in these last days as Satan moves up his assault is the message of deliverance that comes through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. And we should never allow other movements to rob us of this teaching because in some cases it's been abused.

That's why at the end of the service, we as a group of people ought to be ready to stand up, put up our hands, come forward, kneel down and say, Holy Spirit, minister to me. I am being oppressed by Satan. I am obsessed by Satan.

So how else does that happen in these spiritual and religious assaults? I want to be a little more contemporary in this now and say that I believe that happens in specific ways. It happens by unbiblical approaches to evangelism. For instance, if you are told to put your testimony on a cassette and put it in a mountain somewhere so that there'll be a tribulation witness, that's unbiblical evangelism.

Much of what some of our friends do in that area is still biblical evangelism, but this facet of it is. I believe that unbiblical evangelism relates to manipulation. I absolutely despair when I go to an audience or to a church and the evangelist says, will you raise your hand? And a person

unsuspecting raises his or her hand.

And then they say, now you raised your hand and if you meant it and if you are sincere and true, you will come forward. In other words, if you don't, you're a deceiver and a liar. That's unbiblical evangelism.

Unbiblical evangelism is also that evangelism which simply goes out for numbers to be counted after a crusade and cares absolutely nothing for maturity. Unbiblical evangelism is when we seek for decisions but do not seek for that person to live to the praise of the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, there are heretical doctrines coming on the scene today and we must test the scriptures and we must ask, does my theology result by inductive reasoning or deductive reasoning? Does my theology result by a little thing that I appreciate talking about or does it result because of the interpretation of the word given under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost? There is the division of the fellowship.

And of course, there are always those individuals who would like to start their own following and say, don't worry about following Christ, follow me. There comes a time, by the way, that there must be a division of the fellowship, but that division should take place as a result of you being put aside rather than putting aside the fellowship. And you will find that if you're living for Christ and there is a conflict between biblical and unbiblical doctrine, that there will come a natural separation, but you still do not need to walk away in bitterness and despair.

And maybe the person who sees you walk away will say like John Wesley did when his wife left him and someone said, John Wesley, why don't you ask your wife to come back? He said, I didn't send her away and neither will I call her back. And so maybe that's what we should do when groups find necessary to leave the church. I didn't send them away and neither will I call them back.

And then, of course, there are attractive new groups happening. And this is the standard that I remain by when I study the body of evangelical truth that has been given from the first century until now. And these truths that have been generally held in worldwide evangelism and the truths that have held together the body of Christ as emphasizing the finished work of Christ and Calvary and his glorious return.

These are the things that I adhere to. And there are many, many other little itty bitty things that I like to think about and talk about and agitate a congregation with. But my friends are not necessarily the things that I want to finally hold to.

And so when I see an attractive new group coming up with an attractive new revelation, I immediately bring it into question. And I'd rather go by the time tested word of God becomes groups come and groups go. But the church of the living God will abide forever.

Just think about these things. Then let's go down to verse seven. And in the same house remain eating and drinking such things as they give for the laborer is worthy of his hire.

Do not go from house to house. Now, that term means do not go about seeking better quarters because a servant of the crucified master in the work of the Lord cannot be a seeker of luxury. Apparently, in the year 100 A.D., there is a book written entitled The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.

And this was the church's first book of order. And the laws of remuneration were set down for the prophet. Would I love to see that book written in 100 A.D.? But when I look back at verse seven, what does it say? It says, of course, back in verse two, there'll be a shortage of laborers.

In verse three, there'll be spiritual and religious assaults. But in verse seven, there'll be a terrible pressure to live like others. And this will bring about self-centered goals, a family breakdown.

And you may think that this is unrelated, but it really isn't. It will bring about a church without discipline. Because if you have an undisciplined person, an undisciplined home, you'll have an undisciplined church.

And the church that is at the place where it says, do as you please, is a church that is heading for destruction. There must be rules and order for the new church of the new age that we see in the Scripture. And we must come back with, thus saith the Lord, but do it in the gentleness and in the graciousness of the Lord.

I travel with Art Perry, whom most of you know, a dear Italian brother, who is the first award winner of the Mario Lanza scholarship, a man that God has very wonderfully used. One day we were out in a particular part of the country, I'd better not say where, and we were talking together about a certain evangelist. And Art said, Alf, I'm just getting tired of the mounting bills, and I get tired of the problems of finances, and my wife calling me to say that the telephone bill has to be paid, and this and that.

He said, I would sure like to live for a while like Evangelist so-and-so. And I said, how does he live? I happen to know, because we were standing not too far from his house. And when you see him in one of the great marinas, he comes in with the latest of clothing, which is fine, but he also carries a monkey on his shoulder.

And when you go to the house, it's right by the waters. There's a beautiful yacht outside. Three German carpenters came in from Germany and spent the whole year putting in BC Redwood in the ceiling of the house.

And then some others came in from Europe to put a bronze dome on the house. And while we were there, there were two Portuguese stone makers putting a \$300,000 stone wall around the house. And this is not just an imagination.

And when the brother goes to an evangelistic meeting, he asks for money. He is not sponsored by a local church. He's not been sent by the church, prayed for by the church, and disciplined by the church.

And so consequently, he takes away very large offerings and says that he has to go back to his remote Canadian home and there support himself and write his books. Now, there is a pressure to live like others. And I hope that young couples don't think that I'm after you tonight.

But my friends across Mr. Sloss, across the whole missionary church, one of the greatest needs we have, and this was brought out in Mr. Holman's computerized report just a few years ago. The greatest need we have is to the ministry to the 20 to 30 year olds within the church. And you go to the local churches and you ask, where are they? What are they doing? What is the ministry? And friends, it's not that they are any less than any other age.

But when you ask, what are they doing? They find out that they're under the pressure to buy a house like others. They're under the pressure for a dining room suite. They're under the pressure for a new car.

They're under the pressure for new clothes. They're under the pressure to go more and more to the restaurants on Sundays and in the weekdays. They're under such unusual pressures for clothing and jewelry and cars and houses and family that friends, I feel sorry for the couples.

They hardly know which way to live and which way to go. And when others come to their house, they say, I must have this new server. I must have this new living room outfit.

I must have the new carpet, because what will my friends think? And what will my girlfriend think? Her husband can supply everything and my husband can't. And so there's the pressure to live like others. You know what it's like.

And I'm not saying we shouldn't have these things. But what I am saying is, let's remember the pressure that our couples are under. Let's remember the pressure for success in the business, the pressure for acceptance, the pressure for friendship.

And they're all under these things in the light of the glorious return of Jesus Christ. And what must we do as elders and senior ladies in the church and men? We must not just condemn them, but we must nurture them and teach them how to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age and begin to learn what is known as the Christian lifestyles that will enable us to survive so that we can proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Yes, that's the pressure to live like others.

Then let me just mention one more thing or two more things as I go through and then I'll try to conclude. And this comes to chapter 10 and verse 6. And if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it. If not, it shall turn to you again.

By the Son of Peace I mean this in a Jewish lifestyle, a man who had a good or a bad quality was called the son of it. Now don't extend your thinking to 20th century ways of saying it. And so if you were a child of wisdom, a child of wrath, that meant you were a son of wisdom, a son of wrath.

And if you were a child of peace, it certainly meant that you were the one who was characterized by a good life. And it is known as human happiness against the lordship of the price of peace. And so we go back by saying what Billy Graham mentioned when he was in Halifax, Nova Scotia, just recently.

He spoke about the four great problems of our age. And I'll only mention one. He said the problem is known as the hedonistic problem, the hedonistic culture.

And the whole hedonistic culture is this, more money on vacations, more money on booze and parties, more money on self, more money on all of these things, and just forget about what the Lord Jesus Christ can do for you, a hedonistic culture. And oh, wherever I move across our great nation, friends, I realize that in these, the sort of final era of the ministry that I will enter into, I could enter into it as a pessimistic preacher. I could be down on everything.

I could be constantly preaching against things and could make a flip over and become entirely legalistic. But I have intended that that will never happen. And I have intended that even though Luke chapter 10 and verses 13 to 16 will come into operation, where we speak in 15 about Capernaum being thrust, exalted to heaven, but cast down to hell, I am going to resolve before the Lord that we will preach a positive gospel and a positive message in the teaching of the word of God that will bring about people who are committed to a hedonistic culture to the true happiness and peace that comes through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I don't want to say any more on that because I said too much the other night. Let's go to the last of that whole area of the conflict of the age. Let's take verse 17 to 21 and end up in a great note of rejoicing.

What is your rejoicing? What is your rejoicing? And the 70 returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, You think it's great, don't you, that Satan's subject unto you? But I'd like you to know that I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven. If you think that the demons are subject to you, can you imagine what happened on that day when we cleaned out the glory world and verse 19? Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

And may I just bring this out to you tonight that very often in the last days here is where the diverted rejoicing takes place. And we hear the diverted rejoicing that often centers in the gifts and thank God that all of the gifts are in operation today. We have the diverted rejoicing of the healing of the body.

We have the diverted rejoicing of the erection of great buildings. We have the diverted rejoicing of the super churches. We have the diverted rejoicing of the electric church.

Remember that in Greece it became philosophy. In Rome it was a new system. In Europe it was a culture.

In Germany it was a theology. But in America the church has become an enterprise. And so therefore, as it is an enterprise, we start rejoicing in it.

And we are statistically conscious. And we constantly speak about great churches, growing churches, more money. We speak about the growing budgets.

We speak about the number of people who may be on the paid staff of the church. And so notice what the word of the Lord says in verse 20, notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. And that's my rejoicing tonight, that my name is written in heaven.

And written there because it is in the book of the Lamb, the Lamb's book of life. And you say, why is it called that? Because the Lamb is the author and whose name is in there is the name of life. And it's the Lamb's book of life because He is my representative who writes my name in there.

There's a story told that actually happened just a few weeks ago of a young boy, seven years old in the city of London. We happen to know about this family. The little lad was praying one evening at home with his mother and he said, Mama, is it true that God has a book? Now, she wasn't going into the several as we do in theology often and say, well, there's the book and there's a book, there's a book of human generations and there's a book of judgments and there's a book of records and the Lamb's book of life.

He was interested in one book. It's the only one that really matters. That's the book that has your name as to whether or not you'll be able to enter into God's heaven because you've trusted God's way of salvation.

And she said, yes, son, there is a book. She said, Mom, is my name written there? Well, she said, Sonny, if you've given your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, your name is there and you need to trust him because he puts the name in the book. And he said, Mom, do you mind if I pray? And she said, no, let's get down together and pray.

So they knelt down together and he prayed like this. Dear Jesus, I'm just talking to you tonight to find out whether my name is in your book. Please go down through and see if it's been checked off all right.

And if it has, Lord, please put another check mark there just in case, because when I arrive on the last day, I want you to find it for sure and without any trouble. And, you know, I thought that was a very simple child's prayer. And though many times, dear friends, I looked at this and said, yes, my name's written there on that page, white and fair.

And even though it is a mystery as to how God keeps books and all that takes place, friends, I'm glad that I can go there and check. And do you know how you check? You find out whether or not you have the witness of the spirit and the witness of the spirit causes you in a time of worship and prayer and thanksgiving to immediately call out to the Lord and to respond and to

be able to say, Father, Abba Father, Father, I belong to you. I am in your family and I know it.

Let's all stand together, shall we? We're going to sing just really thoughtfully tonight for a few minutes, hymn number 97. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but I wholly lean on Jesus' name, on Christ the solid rock I stand.

As Robin plays this for us tonight. My dear friends, I think that it's time to have a message tonight as we've had it really all the way through on the assurance of salvation. And I wonder how many there are in the audience this evening that would say, Alfrese, I'm not really sure that my name is written in God's book.

In fact, I'd like to say this, that I've gone into the conflict of the ages and I may be wrapped up in some things that have taken me away from the keenness of the return of Jesus Christ. And what I really need to have tonight is a ministry to me. You see, in camp meeting, we've always thought about leaving the pew and walking down the aisle and kneeling at the front as meaning I'm a backslider.

I've never known Christ. And people say, oh, there she goes again to the altar. There he goes again to the altar.

But it isn't that at all. It's a Bethel. It's a place of meeting.

It's a place where if you're discouraged and you've walked away from the Lord that you should be able to say, I need to come back for a ministry tonight. I need to come to a place of prayer. I need to wait on the Lord.

Friend, don't let anyone banish the place where you can meet God. Some of you have places at home where you meet the Lord. But I think that this is a symbol of the place where we meet together as a fellowship and as a church, whether it's the Baptist Church or the Alliance Church or the Missionary Church.

Several represented here tonight. It's a place where we meet God while we sing the hymn. If you're not really sure of your relationship with the Lord that your name is in his book, would you come and kneel with us? And if you need ministry tonight, someone to pray with you because you are confused, misled, despondent, heavy in heart, and you are under the terrible pressures of the conflict of the age.

My friend, you might be under satanic obsession tonight. You're obsessed with certain, certain things. You're under the influence of Satan's power to the point that you recognize that he is endeavoring to infiltrate your mind and to cause you to be uncertain.

Don't be afraid to put it before the blood. All of us could go out of here tonight rejoicing in the name of Jesus because the blood delivers. You see why I don't want to put the pressure on an invitation? Because friends, it's a gathering place.

Genesis 49, 10. Unto him shall the gathering of the people be when Shiloh comes. And there we are.

We're gathering in his name tonight. As many as need to gather for prayer and the Lord to help you. Come while we sing that first verse just thoughtfully.