

February 24, 1935 (Sunday afternoon)

Bethel Temple

Reading of scripture. I Peter 1:1-13

And that passage of scripture, my brethren, brings before us this afternoon some of the marvels of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. When I read that scripture today I had to marvel that the angels of God that have been superior in many respects to God's human creation, those angels who live and dwell in the glory world of God have actually had a hunger in their hearts and their spirit make-up and have longed to enquire and search out some of the secrets of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Oh, that God would open our eyes and would do something with our nature that He might open it up to the revelation and the in-coming of the Glory and Power of the gospel and the grace of God that the prophets of old have longed for and searched ever diligently, century after century, as they prophesied and ministered to the people of God, and as they heard those marvelous utterances going through themselves of something God was going to do in the last days and times upon this earth there was a heart hunger on them to know and look into those things that can only be known by men and women of this present age. How they longed and searched and I am going to say to you if we ever explore the length, breadth, and height of God's love we are going to have to re-vitalize our praying and seeking after Almighty God. Never in all the world was there such a danger of the gospel of Christ being warped and brought to nothing. There is a new kind of atheism coming into the world and I believe there is a new kind of subtle un-belief coming on the people of God. There is something working so insidiously in the heart of people and they are sailing along more or less satisfied with what they have as their hope of eternity and the prospect that lies before them.

But I want to say to you that after all that God has done for us in the last thirty years we are behind the standard. The Holy Spirit doesn't prod anybody. He is not using a sword or club over us but is holding out a prospect and spirit before you and me of a sweeping revival power that will grip the world and bring millions and millions into the Kingdom of God. My heart is so hungry more and more every day to see the power of God coming on the people and really more and more appreciated than it has been before. When we remember the class of men of whom Peter was speaking and we remember how, for centuries, they were prompted as concerning the last days. Moses prophesied of the last day and the last times and he prophesied of the grace of God that should come to us, not by a process of law or by some legal command being laid on the people, but he prophesied that a prophet "like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up unto you and unto Him ye shall hearken." My brethren, I wonder in these last days whether the ears of the people are going to be opened? The prophets searched and searched diligently. They waited on God and went through some things you and I have never known anything about.

The other day as I was reading accounts of the work in different parts of the world I realized this; in India, while they follow a mistaken idea and wrong teaching, nevertheless those people over there put themselves through such conditions that you and I would find it impossible to do. I am glad we don't do those things but when I see men go through those conditions to discover God and that they might become good I tell you they set an example even to Christianity in consecration and denial of self. As I read of Mahatma Gandhi, his first weapon is denying himself in fasting and after his own order and form of prayer, knowing nothing of Jesus Christ. He is seeking to change conditions for 350 millions of people, and you will agree with me, mistaken tho' he be, he has left his mark on the world and caused governments and nations to open their eyes and do things that never would have been done had he not consecrated himself to the emancipation of his kind. Without the glorious back-ground of the gospel he has gone through a sanctification and consecration and God has moved. I say if a man like that can do those things and leave his impress on 350,000,000 people, Christ intended to leave his impress not on 350,000,000

ut on every living soul on the face of this earth, 16 hundred million of people and thank God, the consecration of Jesus Christ has produced marvelous results but, my brethren, one thing for Him, God has called out the church and you and I are members of that church and my thought to you is what are we in turn re-producing? There can be no power in christian experience until there comes on us, as it came on the prophets long ago, a hunger to know God's mind and work, and search diligently those things that were to come to the people in the last days. We don't find anything without a real seeking. Everything we get from God we have to search for, but oh, the awful apathy and the awfulness of the lethargy on Christendom. I have been looking over the situation in the past week. Here and there is a bright spot but we must arise and shake ourselves and clothe ourselves with the beautiful garments of Jesus Christ if we are going to win men. God cares nothing for ritual and men's ideas. The thing God and heaven and angels and blood-washed and redeemed men are concerned about these days in the Glory world is the salvation of men from this world and being redeemed back again into the image and likeness of Almighty God. We are letting slip the glorious secret of prevailing prayer. The devil is beating you and me to it. As sure as we are a congregation this afternoon the devil is getting the best of the bargain unless we shake ourselves and take time to search of the glorious thing God has done.

I don't wonder the Lord wrote in our gospels the parable of the ten virgins. To me it is the most important parable and shows a condition that was bound to obtain unless men and women followed the divine injunction and arose and shook the un-belief and stood true to the testimony of Jesus day by day. Hallelujah! Here we have the Apostle describing those people in days past. They searched and searched. Daniel is an example of those Old Testament prophets, and it came into his heart when the time of the Messiah should be fulfilled and he read those books and he began to realize something was due to take place and he began to seek the face of God and God sent forth the last day prophecy. He began with the moment in which Daniel was living, starting with the King under whom Daniel was serving, and because of the faithfulness of that prophet He began to deal with the king himself and unfolded to him the course of ages down to the end of time. He prayed and searched and because he did we have the revelation of the book of Daniel that takes us down to the moment when Christ comes and the Kingdom Age is established. Possibly it has come to you that there is nothing further for you to know. Maybe it is coming to the heart of Christians that we have received all the revelation God has to give. I believe, because of the second coming of Jesus Christ, that Satan is using that marvelous scripture to lull people to sleep and take away their efforts and energies. I was reading this morning of a new theory that is being propounded, by what is supposed to be good people, that no longer is water baptism or the Lord's Supper necessary in preaching the gospel of God. They say Christ began in water, it is true, and laid down the order of the bread and wine but no longer is it necessary and people are joining to that idea by the thousands and it is breaking down those wonderful oracles God has delivered to us under the broken body and the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Lord. Are we personally, brethren, living up to our privileges and rights in the gospel?

We know, according to the testimony of the Apoetle, that God is redeeming us for the purpose of bestowing upon us an incorruptible inheritance and eternal something and undefiled and a home in Glory world. Hallelujah! May the Lord God open up our eyes and show us that we still have something to preach and get us off those easy chairs and away from those things that make us useless for God and the salvation of men. We may allow our interest to wane and many are. I warn you. We are letting many marvelous revelations of God go by because we are missing that secret ministry of prayer and waiting on God. I believe God wants me to send a warning note. I am giving myself to prayer and working day and night in the gospel. The things I have been through this week have just broken my heart. I have been burying the poor this week. I have seen people weeping and crying because they had no place to lay their dead

and I told them, "Brethren, dry your eyes. It is not a question so much of being alive or being dead, but it is a question how we use the time while we live." Do you know, I notice that when it comes to the time of burial or cremation they always begin to search for some expression that would give you an idea that the dead one believed in God. Such a flimsy reed when God has set such a bounteous table before us. When men and women can be redeemed and brought into the presence of God, when that new-born creature can be baptized with fire and look into those things with eyes more penetrating than the angels. Sometimes we hear quoted a scripture that there is joy among the angels. It doesn't say that. It says there is joy among the angels when one sinner has repented.

Now, what kind of Christians are we? I am anxious, by the grace of God, to become a deeper soul-winner than I have ever been in my life and I am sure the spirit is on the people to be likewise. I am anxious to see people moved by the Holy Ghost to winning of men and women for the Kingdom of Almighty God. Are we laying the lines of our lives so God can use us? Are we going to meeting just to go and enjoy ourselves and take an easy place in the congregation and have a good time? Let us get away from that. Let us make it a real serious business. Let us get back to our knees and prayer and consecration and true living of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and those things will count and God will honor those things and the work of the Lord will go on and on where these folk sit in darkness and have no idea how dark they are. I was preaching at a funeral service yesterday and the wife of the man who was dead suddenly threw up her arms and gave one cry and fell to the middle of the room. ~~They don't know.~~ When the spirit is gone then they take time to think what they have missed. They may be to blame but are we in any sense to blame? Have we been true to the testimony of the gospel? We have so much to talk about to the people. What a transformation it brings into the homes and lives as we tell them the story of Jesus Christ and his love for them.

Shall we consecrate ourselves anew? After standing by brother Powell last night I was thinking if, spiritually, we could leave someone behind us to carry on our work. We leave sons and daughters in a natural sense. Isn't it possible to leave someone in a spiritual sense. Because you have been faithful to God in testifying of his Glory isn't it possible to leave a line of succession of those who have been born of the Spirit because we took them to God in prayer. I believe it is. May God raise up someone from the converts of Brother Powell who will go on with his work.

HALLELUJAH! Do you want to be a soul winner? Let us pray.

WHO:MH

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