

## The Testimony of Jesus (Part 13)

Let's pray: "Lord, as we have been considering Your unfailing love this morning, it did bring forth a spirit of worship and adoration unto You because each one of us in a very personal way are here because of Your unfailing love, and we are kept by that unfailing love. And even as we have been reflecting back upon history, we see Your unfailing love truly coming in in situations that were impossible with man but not with You. And today, as we continue on, we are looking to You for Your blessing and Your anointing upon this time. But we want to see beyond the facts of history and capture the spirit and essence of it and to be encouraged by ones that have gone before us. We would be exhorted by things we see that were not according to Your will, and to have an ear to hear what You are saying to us in these last days. So we do present ourselves to You, looking to You to anoint this time and allowing Your Spirit to lead us into all that You have for us. In Your precious name. Amen.

These verses in Ephesians 3:17-19 are the same verses that we had last time because we are continuing this morning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These verses capture the very essence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because we see so much of what God did through His width and length and height and depth of His love being manifested throughout believers and throughout this world.

Ephesians 3:17-19—"So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to all the fullness of God.

With that love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge and to be filled with all the fulness of God is what He is after. This will be the final culmination that we all will be filled with that fulness when we behold Him face to face. And we are thankful for that.

Also there is a warning In Ephesians 4:14-16, and this is after Paul has continued to share this blessing that we have been brought into.

Ephesians 4:14-16—"As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

Paul's warning is particularly in verse 14, because he is very aware of things that can lead us astray in some very blatant ways and very subtle ways through the many winds of doctrine that blow here or there, the trickery of men, the craftiness of deceitful scheming. Tragically, We see many different ways that believers have been led astray, but it brings us back to being in fellowship in truth and love, to grow up in all aspects. I appreciate the word 'all aspects' because most times people are led astray because they simply focus on one aspect of Christ, and that one aspect all of a sudden become *the thing*. We are thankful for the many

unspeakable aspects of Christ that our brother shared at the table, but if we just focus on one of those, we are going to live an unbalanced life. It will make us open to going astray from what is originally upon God's heart and in His intent and purpose that together we go on into the fulness of what He is calling us to. We will see that happening during this century also because one of the things we see throughout church history is that whenever there is a great move of God, there is a counter action of the enemy to try to lead ones astray, blatantly or subtlety, and we will see that today. But His goal is summed up in verse 16: "The whole body, everyone being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, not just some." He has that desire for every joint to be a supply according to the proper working of each individual part. Each of us has a part in this. It is a call. It is not just left to a few. There is a call upon each one of us. As we respond to His love, the proof of that love is that we are growing up together in Him. So as we continue in this 19<sup>th</sup> century, we want to use these verses as our foundation for the things that we consider today.

We started on the 19<sup>th</sup> century last time, and we looked at the first two issues. One of them was the great increase of burden throughout the world for going out on world-wide missions. And there were also many independent groups throughout the U.S. and Britain, including the Brethren, who were going out on missions.

Today, we want to look at the Oxford Movement, the testimony of Jesus in Russia which were called the Stundists, Fulton Street and large prayer meetings in the cities in the U. S., and the Keswick Convention. We want to see in a very wonderful way God's great faithfulness. I mentioned that whenever the Lord is doing a great work, the enemy comes in also with counterfeits and attacks. So during the 19<sup>th</sup> century we will see some of the toils of the enemy from a worldly point of view. There was both evolution and communism being brought in. Evolution did a great damage to the minds and hearts of many related to the question of who the Creator is and the whole matter of creation, and we are still wrestling with that today. We see how Communism has spread throughout this world, and the very heart of it denies the existence of God. There are so many different thinkings and philosophies that are going on that permeates us, and it is spreading. But also, within the so-called church we see in many places where Christian Science, 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witness, Mormons actually fall under the Christian category. If you look in places like Wikipedia, they will say this is a Christian sect here or there. So I think most of us are aware enough that there is a fundamental flaw in these. They are just movements, counterfeit movements to lead ones astray from the real heart of God.

I want to be careful here because we have talked about the Roman Catholic Church. There are believers in those churches. What we are talking about is the system itself. It is amazing how within these various groups we can find believers, and how they stay there, I do not know; that is not my job. But they are there, and we have to be careful with Carte Blanche applications. But we are looking at the systems.

Many of us are familiar with Christian Science which says that God never created things and sin is just an illusion, diseases just exist in your mind, and you just have to believe and it will go away.

7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists changed a lot of the things related to the humanity of Christ, and salvation depended upon keeping the law. These are very broad general statements.

Jehovah Witnesses deny the Trinity and the Deity of Christ, atonement and various aspects of that.

Mormons created the Book of Mormons which they say is equal with the Scriptures. Again, they have the error about the Person and work of Jesus Christ, about how ones can be saved, about heaven, and the Trinity. Thankfully we do not live according to the Mormons because heaven is not full yet; there are more than 140,000 believers. Thank God, there is room for all of us.

I do not want to focus on these things which are the negative. But I just wanted to make us aware of these things. And it is good for us to see that whenever God is moving, there is the counter movement that lead ones astray by every wind of doctrine and deceitfulness and schemes.

### **The Oxford Movement**

There was another major movement during this time. It was far more subtle than these, and it was called the Oxford Movement. It got its name because the ones who began it mainly finished at Oxford. It was begun about 1833 by John Keble and John Henry Newman who were wonderful believers and part of the Anglican Church.

One of the things that began happening in England was a new law passed by the House of Commons which allowed non-Anglicans to serve in the House of Commons. Before that if you were not a member of the Anglican Church, you could not serve in the House of Commons. So this opened it up for many to be serving in the House of Commons that were not part of the Anglican Church, and it really started to impact the power of the Anglican Church. When anybody starts to take away someone's power, we know what the reaction is; there is going to be a counter attack. They are going to try something here. These ones had good intentions. They saw that the Anglican Church was in a very low spiritual condition at that point in time because through the movement of the Wesley's and some of the other independent groups many had left the Anglican Church, and ones who were within it had somewhat withdrawn into what they called the Low Church. These were the Enthusiasts, people who were full of enthusiasm. If you love the Lord and displayed anything you were considered an Enthusiastic back then, and they ended up separating themselves, but the more affluent and less spiritual stayed within the Anglican Church and was called the High Church. If you believed in the Lord you were in Low Church. If you did not believe in the Lord you were the High Church. So we want to always take the low place. Actually being called the Low is good. Thank you, we will take that.

They also started printing tracts. Some of them were poets and some were great writers, so they were called the Tractarians. They tried to bring ones back to the Lord, but they made one tragic mistake. Well, they made many mistakes actually, but their foundational mistake was they were encouraging ones to return to the teachings of the 4<sup>th</sup> century Fathers. This was their

desire in bringing ones back to the 4<sup>th</sup> Century Fathers. What is the fallacy there? We are not bringing ones back to where they were before; we are bringing ones back to Christ. They wanted to bring ones back to the 4<sup>th</sup> Century Fathers, the so-called Church Fathers. In doing that they were reviving ritualism and mysticism of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and they made more elaborate vestments, liturgy, and architectural buildings. Sadly through their tradition and ritual were taking priority over the Scriptures. The subtle thing about this was that it looked very beautiful to the naïve or ones who really did not know the Lord that well. They saw men dressed now instead of a black robe they had beautiful vestments. They raised the Lord's table, the Eucharist above everything. They had some gold around it which made it look beautiful. The architecture of the buildings were taking on a new form; it was a beautiful display. Everybody wanted to go there, but it was not leading them to Christ. Outwardly, it was far more subtle and the impact it had was that it really devalued the Word of God. It caused the teachings of the Fathers' tradition of men to be more valuable than the Word of God. We see the impact of that today through liberalism within Christianity. The Word of God does not have the value that it is supposed to have, but many people were caught up by this and went into it. They thought that by doing more things they were becoming more spiritual because if you are focusing on works then it is easy to create some works for ones to do.

A couple of key men in this was John Henry Newman. I am pointing out these two because we actually have their songs in "Christ in Song." There were some great hymn writers then. Henry Newman went so far as to leave the Anglican Church. He went all the way back before that to the Roman Catholic Church and became a cardinal. His brother was in the Brethren Movement, and he was in the Roman Catholic Church. In Christ in Song there is a famous hymn: "Lead Kindly Light." He was caught in the middle of a storm in the Mediterranean Sea kind of like Paul, and he was praying that the Lord would lead him kindly with the light to safety.

Probably the most famous hymn writer among them was Fredrick William Faber. We have six of his songs in the hymn book and they are very precious. I appreciated Christian Chen equating Faber to Solomon. He started off so well, and he had a lot of great wisdom. When you look at his hymns, there is a great depth there, but like Solomon who ended up in idolatry, Faber also ended up in idolatry. Some of his latter hymns are worshiping Mary.

I grew up Presbyterian, and we would sing "Faith of our Fathers" all the time, but as I was studying him a little more, "Faith of our Fathers" is related to the church fathers, and it kind of puts a little different light on that hymn. If you do not know that, it is great, so we can still sing it with a purity even though he may have had a different intent. But to show his passion, # 206 in the hymn book, "O Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord," is very precious. If you look at his heart as he says, "Thy love is like a burning fire within my very soul. Burn, burn, O love within my heart, burn fiercely night and day, till all the dross of earthly love is burned and burned away." What an intensity and passion for the Lord! "What limit is there to this love? Thy flight, where wilt thou stay? On, on! our Lord is sweeter far today than yesterday." It is a very precious hymn, and we have many of his earlier ones in the hymn book.

Thank the Lord that when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord raises up a standard, and the man who took the stand against this was Spurgeon. This actually cost him his reputation in many ways because as he stood up and pointed out the fallacies of the Oxford Movement, many people abandoned him; they did not want to be associated with him. They thought he was being divisive, not loving them but loving everybody. Actually it helped many others to take a stand because they knew something was not right. By Spurgeon taking a stand, he actually got compared to Luther taking a stand against the Roman Catholic Church at the time of Reformation. Spurgeon was raised up for such a time as this. I appreciated this quote that Spurgeon has because it shows us the intensity of the warfare we are in continually.

“Every period, no matter when we are living, on some account or other, is a crisis. The conflict between the powers of darkness and the Spirit of truth concerns such vital interests, and is conducted with such unceasing energy that each moment is big with importance and every instant is the hinge of destiny.”

He was eloquent with words. Sometimes we do not think a moment counts, but he was saying, “Every moment, every instant is a hinge with destiny of where we are headed.” He gave a lot of correcting messages, bringing ones back to the foundation of the truth. We are justified by faith not by works. The Bible is the sole authority for believers. He reinforced believers baptism versus infant baptism. Salvation is by grace not by baptism. Also, they were practicing transubstantiation at the Lord’s table, and he was clarifying again that that was a false teaching. We are thankful that when Spurgeon was raised up, he had the courage to take a stand for God’s interest and God’s purpose in that hour because the enemy is always out there. So we can be encouraged in that.

### **The Testimony of Jesus in Russia**

For many centuries the Orthodox Church was kind of the official church of Russia. In 1054 there was a great split between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Eastern Orthodox Church went up through Ukraine and Russia, and was very powerful there. That was their main realm of influence, so they were the Official Church. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century many of the Mennonites migrated to Southern Russia or Ukraine. It is interesting that Ukraine and Russia are in such a battle because Ukraine at this point was the bread basket of Russia. That is where all the wheat and most everything else was grown there. Also, throughout history Ukraine was the Bible belt of Russia with many precious believers there. What we call the Bible Belt here, Ukraine was called the Bible Belt there. So there has been a great conflict between Ukraine and Russia that has been going on far more than just the little bit we see today.

The Mennonites moved into the Ukraine area spreading around, and in 1812 Czar Alexander I opened Russia to some foreign Bible Societies, allowing different ones to come in. And of course if you are bringing in Bibles, the official church is going to be against it. So the Orthodox Church came out against it, but praise God, the Bible had a tremendous impact upon peasants. Many of them in their homes were reading the Bible, and they were using the Bible to

learn to read because they did not have other books. So the Bible was actually a school book, and in reading it they were finding truth. It was a precious way of teaching people. So many of them got saved, and they became known as the Stundists, which comes from an old German word meaning 'hour.' They would be together for an hour or so for a meeting. Their meetings were always for an hour. That is why the people called them Stundists.

The Stundists would invite their neighbors to their homes for Bible readings and sharings. In Russia there was no hope of anything, and then all of a sudden these people had a hope. There was a joy within them, and it was spreading very rapidly among the peasants in particular. There is no official estimate, but some have said that there was over a hundred thousand people who got saved among the peasants throughout that area during that time.

The Gospel was shed through the aristocracy by Lloyd Radstock but there was not a great movement in that. There was a lot of individuals but not a great movement.

Persecution began in 1861 under Alexandra II. He revoked the privilege of certain religious groups, and they began to come under government oppression. It did not end up well. Alexandra II got blown up later on by a group who was against him in 1881. It began making it more and more difficult for the believers to meet, and because of that many believers among the Mennonites and the Stundists migrated to the U. S. and South America at that time. And the ones who remained suffered persecution more and more. That is when they started moving them to Siberia.

In 1881 Alexander II was assassinated, and with that assassination all the groups outside the Orthodox Church were automatically outlawed and persecuted. If you were not an official member of the Orthodox Church you were a criminal. But the Stundists continued to meet secretly from house to house or they would find a place in the forest or by a river, and they would continue to meet. When they were discovered, they would be imprisoned or beaten or exiled to Siberia. One of the plans they had when they determined who the leaders would be was to send them to the Orthodox Monasteries for reforming and re-education. But what they discovered pretty soon was that the believers whom they sent to the monasteries knew more about the Lord and the Bible than the monks and the priests did in the monasteries. So they began to have what they thought was a negative effect upon these priests because the priests were coming to the Lord. So they said, "This is not going to work. The re-education is going the wrong way." So they stopped it and then sent them to Siberia. They did not stop punishing them.

The children were taken away from parents and given to Orthodox families. The property was seized, and they were forbidden from moving. They would take their passports away from them so they could not move to another city, and they were barred from many jobs. So there was a lot of suffering and persecution, but if they recanted and said, "I do not believe anymore; I want to become part of the Orthodox Church," then many of their rights would be restored. During times of persecution some did give in, but the vast majority really stood, and the testimony of Jesus continued to grow. We see this in many countries, whether China, Russia or

other countries, that when persecution increased, the enemy thought he was going to destroy the testimony of Jesus. But when it goes under-ground, it actually grows because it becomes stronger through persecution and suffering.

In 1905 the Czar granted liberty of faith and freedom, but it was short-lived because in 1914 there was World War ! and in 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution came in and utterly destroyed all religions. But praise God, even today there is that hidden seed of faith in Russia. How many before today had heard of Stundists? It is a precious group. They are our great ancestors there who stood for the testimony of Jesus. There are a couple of books written by them, and we are thankful for them. Here are a couple of their testimonies, and this one was a local farmer.

“He began to realize that his life was that of a filthy brute. And one day overwhelmed by a crushing sense of his guilt, he had thrown himself on the floor, and was fervently praying for forgiveness and light. ‘O God, enlighten me; make me a changed man. I besought Him with tears and sobs, when all at once it seemed as if someone tore the clothes from off my back, whereupon a marvelous sense of freedom, a feeling of intense joy came over me, and I knew God thenceforth.” He then went from village to village sharing the gospel. What an impact, a conviction of the Holy Spirit!

This is another one of a young teenage girl who was in the Orthodox Church where when you finished praying, you always had to do the sign of the cross. A teenage girl was asked by her persecutors, “Why do you not make the sign of the cross?” Her reply was, “Christ’s love and suffering for her on the cross had been graven in her heart so she did not need an outward sign to remind her of them.” They whipped her and let her go. Praise God, that young girl was able to stand in the midst of persecution and testify about having the reality of Christ in her heart.

Even under the persecution many would go out every day and share the Gospel. What they would do quite often was every day they would take their stands outside the taverns and wait for the habitual drunkard or the weak-willed farmer who came to squander the proceeds of the sale of his cattle or corn. Many a poor sinner was reached in this way, and brought to repentance and to God, at the cost of prison or penal servitude to the ones who had sought and won him. They knew good and well that when they went out, they took the chance of being arrested and persecuted, but they still went to seek and save the lost. That is very encouraging.

One of the testimonies of one of the Kief leaders, who was a young man of bright intelligence, was accused of spreading heresy. He was told to clear out of Kief. He had five children and a wife, and he left all and went to Kherson and began farming. His seed was hardly in the ground when he was told to move on. The next morning he and his family and one old horse started 150 miles to Bessarabia. They arrived after a month’s journey, but two of the children had died on the way. This continued village after village of being told to move on until they finally arrived in Siberia, after having lost another child. He arrived with his sick wife and two remaining children, famished and emaciated, but with his hope and passion for Christ still strong. Praise God! We are thankful that in that remote and horrible place of Siberia there were ones who were still there sharing the Gospel and providing hope to the hopeless. As we begin

to face more and more persecution in these days, it is not as intense as this at the moment, but we can be encouraged that there is a Lord here, a God who keeps us and provides a way for us in whatever type or form that persecution might come. We are thankful for that.

### **Fulton Street and Other Prayer Meetings**

We will now come to the United States and see how the Lord is moving. We will talk about the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting and also other prayer meetings throughout this country.

In general the overall spiritual condition within the U.S. was weak or lukewarm. After the Second Awakening things began to fade out. Many people were just seeking prosperity, pleasure, gain or profit. There was a real boom-time going on. The west was opening up, the railroads were expanding, everything was booming, and people were making a lot of money. So there was a distraction from their previous commitment to the Lord.

In September of 1857 there was a man by the name of Jeremiah Lamphier who was a business man. However, he left his business to serve the Lord. He found a little church, the old North Dutch Church on Fulton Street in New York City. As he went in and talked with them, they let him be their lay pastor. Before the time for him to begin preaching, he would go around in the community and pass out tracts, inviting families to come, but no one responded. As he was walking around, he noticed that every day from 12 to 1:00 o'clock all the business men would come out in that area. Fulton Street is about a block or two from Wall Street which was the business center of New York. He would notice that all the business men would come out for a break and have a quick lunch at that time. So he had this idea. He said, "Let's have a prayer meeting once a week for these business men who would want to come. So he opened it up for this little prayer meeting. He put out a little poster, and he started handing out leaflets that said, "Daily prayer meeting 12-1, and you can stop anytime as your time admits. So feel free to come."

During the prayer meeting he said, "We will have prayers and exhortations, not to exceed five minutes to give all an opportunity. We will not have more than two consecutive prayers and exhortations, and there will be no controversial points discussed."

He opened it up for ones to come, and the first day on September 23<sup>rd</sup> he was sitting there from 12-12:30 and nobody came. At 12:30 one man came. By 1:00 there were six of them. He was very encouraged. So they kept it going for two or three weeks, and after about the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, there was about forty, and they decided at that point after three weeks to have it daily.

It is really interesting the timing of this as ones started to pray together. In October of 1857 there was a huge financial crash. The banks crashed, the stock market crashed. The banks crashed because people were having a run on money because of the rumors that started. There were two things that impacted it. One was the war in Europe called the Crimean War. Again, Russia was fighting people over Crimea which is the same Crimea that Russia took back a couple years ago. But during that Crimean War, because that area had provided Europe with so much wheat and produce during the war they could not do it anymore. So the farmers in the U. S.

were making a killing shipping food to Europe and everything was prospering. They thought this was great, but when the war ended, the price of wheat went down in the U. S. Many of the farmers had overextended, and they were beginning to suffer. At the same time the U. S. was opening up, all of the railroads were heading out west. Many of the railroad companies that formed did not own any property, so the banks were lending them money. These railroads began to go bankrupt also, and it all coincided together. Because of the crashes that took place is why we have laws in our country today regulating banking.

There was another crash in the 1900's, and because of this crash many people all of a sudden were unemployed. Shortly after the crash there were 3,000 people praying every day in New York City, and by now other places were opening up. In January of 1858, less than a few months after it started in September, there was over 10,00 gathering daily for prayer in New York City in over 150 different places. The population in New York City at this time was about 600,000, and there were 10,000 of them gathering together every day to pray for this situation. This continued all the way up until Lampier's retirement in 1893. With the war coming in 1861-65 it was not as well attended, and toward the end it began to die out. However, he was faithful to continue because he thought that was his calling; he never left that little place. He had many offers to come and start some big ministry and do this and do that, but he said, "This is what God called me to; I am called to do this daily prayer meeting in this little place. He was faithful to what God had called him to do, not looking for his own career, name or fame. And most people have never even heard of him.

I was looking in New York to see if the building is still there, but now it is a Chipotle. Sorry, there is a little plaque there. There is a place where A. B. Simpson did a lot of his teaching, but it is a Pizzeria now. If you go down Fulton Street, you can find this little plaque where the meeting used to be.

### **The Nature of the Prayer Meeting**

The nature of the prayer meeting was that even though there were many clergymen who attended it was led by laymen, and it was kept simple. They opened it with a hymn, a Scripture, a brief exhortation, and then prayer requests could be submitted in writing or verbally. Ones might say, "Pray that my husband can be saved." "Pray that my son can be healed." There was prayer for all types of things, and if you could not be there, you could mail it in to various places, and even if you were shy you could write it on a piece of paper and pass it up front and then they would say, "Okay, let's pray for this." And it was nonsectarian. They were never asked about their church, but only, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" That was the main criteria. They were very orderly and not excessively emotional. They prayed for salvation, for holiness, for repentance, reconciliation, healing. It was done in such a wonderful spirit, and it became so popular that the newspapers in New York would report on it daily. And you do know that newspapers never change. They sent some reporters down with the whole intent of discrediting it, and to find out what was going on. They just wanted to prove it false. But when they reported it in the papers they were utterly amazed at what they found.

They said, "There was no unrestrained excitement, no exuberant and intemperate zeal. There was nothing which required an effort to keep it up, under the common idea that excitement was essential to the revival and part and parcel of the same."

They had seen some of the great awakenings and some of the emotional reactions that were used to work up some excitement that would keep things going, and it was not there. There was just the Spirit of God moving in a very peaceful way. Different ones would pray, and they would have prayers for whoever asked. And we have some testimonies.

An aged pastor prayed for the son of another clergyman. Unknown to him his own son was sitting some distance behind him. The young man, knowing himself to be a sinner, was so impressed at hearing his father's prayer for another man's son that he made himself known in the meeting and said he wanted to submit to God. That was the nature of much of the prayers.

There was a great prize fighter back then, nicknamed "Awful Gardiner," and when he got saved, he visited all of his friends, most of whom were in Sing Sing. So he went to the prison and gave his testimony. Among those who were converted was a noted river thief, Jerry McAuley, who later founded the Water Street Mission. It was one of the first missions for the down-and-outs in New York. So you can see the impact these prayer meetings had on the city.

Nationwide, within a few months people all over the nation were hearing about this. In Philadelphia there were thousands gathering. Also in Boston and cities all throughout the U. S. there were gatherings. It was not just limited to a few places. As I was reading the list of places that had these prayer meetings I did notice two places mentioned in Richmond, Va. I was googling it and searching and searching trying to find out something about the prayer meetings in Richmond during 1858 and could not find anything. If you ever find something let me know. This was not an organized system nor was it some great organization doing it. This was the Holy Spirit touching the hearts and lives of people. And it was estimated that during this time over a million souls were saved, and this is often called the Third Great Awakening. We had the Great Awakening, the Second Awakening, and some people have called this the Third Awakening.

Charles Finney was caught up in it and was so blessed by it that he said, "We have had instruction enough until we are hardened. Finney was a great preacher, so do not mistake this that he was saying, "We do not need instruction." But he is saying, "We have had instruction until we have hardened; it is time for us to pray." People loved to go to meetings and listen, but this was really engaging ones in a new and wonderful way.

Obviously, during this time there was a lot of prayer concerning the unrest about slavery and the recent Dread Scott decision. Little did they know that the horrific Civil War was so imminent. There was an anticipation of a potential civil war because of slavery and the Dread Scott decision along with other things going on. But nobody ever thought it would be anything like it ended up being. There was a lot of prayer for that. And obviously, during the war there were wonderful stories of how many both from the north and the south were saved during that time, and it was because of the prayers of the saints.

It is wonderful how this one brother stepped out in faith to begin a prayer meeting. It was the timing of the Holy Spirit and the environment that he was in that caused many hearts to be stirred. To me the great difference between that point and today is that many so-called prayer movements today try to start from the top. They begin an organization and try to get people to come. This started from the bottom and with the hearts of just ordinary brothers and sisters in a living way. The Lord raised it up and used it. It became very significant and was a great impact upon this country. May the Lord do that in a similar way today.

### **The Keswick Convention**

The Lord was also doing a great work in the U.K. of creating a spiritual hunger. The Lord used D. L. Moody and Sankey to hold Gospel meetings all through the U. K. including Ireland. And they estimated that 285 meetings were being held in about a year and a half period and 2.5 million people came to the various meetings. He would preach to the down-and-outs along Skid Row, he would preach to the more famous ones, the aristocracy and the Royal Opera House of London. He might have 20,000 people at a meeting, 500 people at a meeting, 30 people at a meeting. He did not care about the number, but he was there preaching the Gospel in a glorious way, and many were getting saving during this time.

In 1873 there was a couple from the U. S., Pearsall, Hannah Smith and another brother from England, Evan Hopkins. They got together with a few others, and they really had a desire to seek the Lord about living the Christian life. They sensed there was so much more to enter into of what the Lord had for them. So much focus had been on the Gospel which is good, but they sensed that there was a growing in the Lord, there is much more of living the Christian life than they were experiencing. They saw that the principle for the holy, victorious Christian life was not suppression, eradication but by counter-action. By suppression what we are saying is that the Christian life is not lived by our own will saying, "I will not sin, I will not sin." It is not a matter of suppressing yourself, suppressing sin. I think we have all tried it and all have failed. That is one thing we have in common.

Nor was it by eradication. There was a teaching back then that if you got saved and was really committed, your self-life is eradicated and you will not sin anymore. It is perfection while on the earth. That is not right either; that does not happen. I am using their terms; it is by counter-action, and that means the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is greater and has defeated the self-life and sin within us. That is the victory that we have.

As they began to see this and were entering into it, more and more they were seeing it as the living way. So they started holding some conferences throughout the U. K. of ones who were desiring to enter into more of the reality of this deeper life, a more dedicated life. They were attended by thousands and thousands. As they continued on they were planning to start the Keswick Conference itself, but Pearsall became ill and had to return to the U. S. There were two brothers in Keswick, one named Robert Wilson, a Quaker and a banker, and there was an Anglican curate named Battersby, and they invited ones to Keswick. They sent out invitations throughout England. You are invited to come to "The Union Meetings for the Promotion of Practical Holiness." That was the name of the conference. So in June of 1875 the first Keswick

Convention was held. They pitched a large tent in town, and about 400 came. The theme of the Keswick Convention was then and has always been: "All One in Christ Jesus." Keswick is about 300 miles north of London right across the sea from Belfast, and ones would travel there every year for this.

Whole families would gather for these conferences. Before this the main gatherings for conferences were for the Gospel. Moody and others held big Gospel meetings and the Great Awakenings brought about by Finney. But this was really for believers to be strengthened in the Lord, to grow in the Lord, and it was not just for some; it was open to everybody. Families would all come, crowding the little city of Keswick. There was a big tent for meetings, and the banner was always there: "All One in Christ Jesus." It was held annually, and soon there was three or four thousand who were attending. Tents were set up all over Keswick for various meetings. There was the main meetings, the ladies' meetings. (I always want to call them sisters' meetings, but they called them ladies' meetings. I guess most of the sisters are ladies.) There were children's meetings, so they had a variety of meetings along with different preachers at different times. As we look back at these meetings, in many ways, this was the first family type conference, and it was used in a wonderful way. Actually, after some years Keswick Meetings started popping up throughout the world. There was a Keswick meeting in the U. S., one in Australia, one in Europe and various other places.

The first Keswick missionary was Amy Carmichael. They sent her out to Japan, and then she went on to India. After her father passed away, she was adopted at the age of seventeen by Robert Wilson who was one of the founders of the Keswick Convention. She actually got her call to be a missionary while she was attending Keswick when she was with Hudson Taylor. So we see the impact it had upon her life.

### **The Teaching of Keswick**

We have said that it is not about suppression or eradication, but it is a focus on practical holiness and the deeper life teaching of the victorious life. There are many battles between the theory and reality of holy living, the theory and reality of the victorious life. You can know the theory, you can know the teaching, but it is a matter of entering into the reality of it. There was a great struggle that ones were going through at that time, and it left them always feeling defeated. So Keswick added to what Wesley taught on sanctification by faith. Keswick came in through various ones and they said, "To really enter into this experience the first step is consecration. You have to be given to the Lord, a surrendered life to Him is the very first step." To enter into victory is one of the things they kept pointing out.

What we are talking about here is the contrast between objective truth and subjective truth. The objective truth is the absolute truth of what we have in Christ. To enter into victory is one thing, but to walk in victory is quite another. It is the difference between the gateway and the pathway that was the expression many used. The gateway, the entrance may be for a moment. You enter in and you have it for that moment, but the pathway is a life-long process of obedience. They were trying to take it out of the one-time experience that holiness preachers

were teaching. You need a second blessing; you need this and that. No, you have the indwelling life of Christ within you that will lead you every day into the fulness of what He has for you. We walk moment by moment in the power of that Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. There is a difference between the attained state of purity and the maintained state of purity. When we are saved, we are made saints. We have an attained position because of the blood of the Lamb that we are a holy people; we are saints, but to maintain that in daily life involves the denying of ourselves and saying, “No” to ourselves and allowing that life of Christ within us to overcome and have that predominance over the self-life and sin that so easily entangles us. This teaching is so helpful because without it and understanding these differences you lead a defeated and depressed life. You feel like you can never do it; I can never enter into this. But praise God, Keswick brought this out and was really introducing this in a wonderful way. Brother Nee was greatly helped and influenced by this whole teaching as seen in his book: “The Normal Christian Life.”

The various speakers at Keswick were Evan Hopkins, Handley Moule who was a great Biblical teacher, F. B. Meyer, G. Campbell Morgan, and Andrew Murray who really gave ones a clearer understanding of the indwelling Holy Spirit. He was able to reveal to ones that we have the life of Christ by the Holy Spirit living within us. There had been such a focus on the Holy Spirit coming from without for that second blessing, coming upon us in a mighty way, but he said, “No, you already have the indwelling Spirit, you have the power of Christ in you to do this transforming work. By allowing the cross to work within you, you can enter into it in a greater way.

Mrs. Penn-Lewis gave a clearer understanding of the cross. And the book that Evan Hopkins wrote really summarized what the Keswick teaching is, and it is a wonderful book, “The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life.” The Lord used all these different ones in many wonderful ways to encourage us and bring us into a reality of what He is calling us to live. He has given us a victorious life, but most of us feel like we are living a defeated life, and we are praying that through the Spirit of God living within us, through that life of Christ within we could enter into a greater and fuller expression of His life. This is what Keswick recovered for us. Far more than just a teaching, it was a way of life. It was a way of entering into the fullness of what Christ has for us. And it is also very progressive, day by day. We will always be striving more and more for Christ to have that ascendancy within us. We do not reach that spiritual perfection, but by His grace we can enter into more and more of it. We are thankful for that.

May we stay on the alert and be watchful because the enemy is always attacking the testimony of Jesus both directly and subtlety. There are direct attacks and then there are subtle attacks with every wind of doctrine going around. In the day and time we are living in there are all types of winds of doctrine such as the prosperity gospel or the healing gospel, and others. They take a part and distract us away from the main thing which is Christ. We are thankful that in Christ we do live a prosperous life. It is a wonderful life that we have. We are thankful that in Him there is a healing and a health that goes on within us, but spiritually we have been healed. The Lord prevails over all things. There are so many aspects within the Gospel, but we cannot

just focus on one to the detriment of the others. We can even focus on the house of God to the detriment of focusing on Jesus Christ. If you take Christ out of the house of God, you have a cult and a doctrine. If you take Christ out of God's eternal purpose or you take Christ out of God's love, you have a theory and a teaching. But we are here for life. There is a fulness of all that Christ has that He wants us to enter into, and that is what we are jealous for.

The persecution in these days is in various forms, but may we be encouraged to press on and endure as many have before. Also, may the Lord revive among His people in this late hour an ever increasing burden for both individual and corporate prayer. You cannot have corporate prayer unless ones have an individual prayer life. It is not an either or thing, but as we have more and more of a burden for an individual prayer life, there will be a desire to pray with others. In your individual prayer life there is a limitation, but the more we enter into that, we will see that we need to be praying for brothers and sisters. And this is one of the great needs in this hour within the people of God.

By His grace may we daily enter more and more into the reality of overcoming, that victorious life we have in Christ. We are thankful for the victory that we have, and may we enter into it in a greater way. Above all things, by His love may we maintain that unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is a battle over the testimony in this hour. We see the various battles that ones have been through, and we are thankful how at various points in time God raised up certain ones. He raised up one person and all these prayer meetings came about. He raised up just a couple of people who were used in bringing about Keswick, and we can see the influence that has come from that. May the Lord in this hour continue to raise up faithful servants unknown to man but known well to God to be used of Him to strengthen His testimony and to encourage us all in the days we are living in.

Let's pray:

Lord, we look at ourselves and we see failures, inabilities, weaknesses. We look at You and we see greatness. Lord, help us in a greater way to see us in You. We are thankful that You are in us and we are in You. And we want that fulness of Your life to really be expressed in a very living way in all of our hearts. Lord, we want to be those people of God that You are calling us to be in this hour. There is a testimony that is under severe attack in these last days, and we pray that Christ in us would have such a freedom to work in our hearts and lives. Where that testimony is just a flickering little flame, the Christ in us could come forth to cause it to shine brighter and brighter to both the lost world and a suffering church, a church that is really rudderless and without aim in so many ways upon this earth. Lord, You are calling ones back to Yourself, and we pray that we would be those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches in this hour and can respond to Your call upon us. We are thankful, Lord, for the blessing, we are thankful for Your life within us, and we do not want to hinder that life within us. We want to have that life released in a fulness and a freedom that we could truly enjoy the glorious liberty of the sons of God and be the testimony that You are desiring. In Thy name. Amen.