

Sanctuary (Oak Haven 1969) 7 of 10

By Beholding

#0499

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 1969

Recently where I was holding a series of meetings on the sanctuary, a young woman who has been an Adventist only a few years spoke to me after the meeting and asked me a very simple question about how to have an experience in being sorry for sin. And as we stood there at the pulpit, I gave her a few simple directions. She said, "I'm going home and do it. Nobody ever told me this before." And the things that I was telling her were very elementary. They were what she needed. Some of them I want to share with you this morning. Because there are two things that I'm becoming more and more aware of: and that is, that many Christians, even in the remnant church, are seeking to go on when they haven't started. They are seeking to build a house when they haven't yet the foundation. And all of that is difficult. The other thing is this: as Paul said, the way to go on is the same way we began.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,
so walk ye in Him" Colossian 2:6.

And so this morning, if there's somebody here who has never started the way, listen, and we'll learn together how to begin. And those who have started the way, this morning we're going to learn some more of how to go on.

There are two texts that I'd like to have you think of. One is John 1:29, and the other is Psalm 119:18. And if the boys and girls who are looking up texts in the Bible would look up these two verses, tell me what word you find in one of them that's also in the other one. John 1:29 and Psalm 119:18. There's a certain word that I want you to notice. Now don't tell me what the word is. But when you find the two texts, and you've found the word that's in both texts, I wish you'd hold up your hand. I want to see how many of you find the word in these two texts that is just the same.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith,
Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the
world" John 1:29.

"Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out
of Thy law" Psalm 119:18.

What is the word? Behold. All right. So we're going to study a little this morning about beholding—what does it mean to behold, and *how* do we behold.

John 1:29 says, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Are you interested in having your sin taken away? Then you must do what? Behold the Lamb of God. But how do you do that?

Then over in Psalm 119 verse 18, it says, "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." But how do you do *that*? How do you behold? Put down in your notes 2 Corinthians 3:18, it shows the importance of beholding. It says that, as we behold, something happens to us. What is it? We are changed. We behold and we are changed. This is what happens in a camera. Here is a piece of photographic film in a camera. It's lying there in the dark. Does it have a picture? No. No record of any kind there. But we select something that we want a record of, a picture of, and we open the eye of the camera, focused upon that object. We click. A change takes place in that photographic film. Then it's developed, and we see the picture. Something like this is what happens in the mind.

Now some things can be caught in a flashlight picture, others take a time exposure. I saw once a beautiful picture; it was Yosemite by moonlight. That wonderful valley, that great canyon with a gigantic cliff, was all covered with snow. And the photographer had focused the eye of the camera on that great scene, and he had left it there for several hours. You could see the little streaks across the sky where the stars had moved during the time of the picture. That was all that had moved; it was a quiet winter night. But oh, as the rays from the moon shown down upon that valley, and hour after hour, the plate of the camera took up those rays, then it was developed. What a wonderful picture it made.

You know the astronomers use this method to photograph stars that otherwise would never be visible. At night, the astronomer would turn the eye of the giant telescope on a certain place in the heavens in the evening. And by a clock arrangement, the telescope moved just enough to compensate for the movement of the earth. So, all through the night, the eye of the telescope is focused on that one precise spot in the heavens. And when that plate is developed, hundreds, thousands of objects appear that the astronomer could never see with his eye looking through the eyepiece. It took the piling up of the rays of light from those distant objects, moment after moment, hour after hour.

And this, my dear friends, is what you and I need in our minds—we need to behold. We need to learn this science and master it. And may I tell you, very few people know anything about this today. The whole spirit of this age is run, run, run. It's the "jet age." And I'm afraid that even some workers for God have more or less adopted the idea that if you're going to get people today, you've got to get them on the run. Well, I agree that the people who are running need help. But before they can get very much help, they've got to stop running and start beholding. We must take time to behold. Take time to behold.

Now we could preach about this many sermons. But I want to give you some practical things on how to do it:

First, you need a place to be alone with God. It may be in your room. It may be out under a tree somewhere. It may be that you'll have a difficult problem in finding a place where you can be alone. But if somebody would offer you a

thousand dollars to spend 30 minutes alone in the next 24 hours, I venture that there's hardly a person here but what would find a place and the time. But something worth far more than money is yours; if alone with God you will learn to behold. There's no substitute for it. Sitting in meetings is good, hearing the Word of God, providing it stimulates your mind to go somewhere and behold. Very well. You need, then, a place and a time to be alone with God.

The next thing you need to do when you've reached that time and place is to get down on your knees. If you can't kneel, the Lord understands that; you may sit there and bow your head. But most of you can kneel. If you can't, kneel in your mind. Bow. Because what is it that you're beholding? You're beholding the Lamb of God. And who is He? That's Jesus. He's God, the *Son* of God. And reverently, kneeling, you're going to look at Him. You're going to behold the law, which is the transcript of His character. And reverently, you're going to pray, "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." Where are you? You're alone with God. What are you doing? You're on your knees. What have you come for?

Now, let me say, in order to emphasize it, what you have *not* come for. You've not come to run through a long Santa Claus list of things you wish that God would do as your errand boy. Don't misunderstand me. There are times to tell God everything you wish He'd do. But that isn't beholding, is it? No. And with many people, that's the main thing in prayer. The things may be personal, or they may be for other people, but either way, this is not beholding. Beholding is getting our minds off ourselves and off this planet and its crooked problems, its dangers and uncertainties, getting the mind clear off of that and looking at Jesus—His life, His law, His intercession. And why? Because this is the way we are changed. This is the way that we become different from what we were. This is the way we get victory over sin.

We're down on our knees, and as far as we know how, we're turning our minds away from these things here on earth, and we're thinking of Jesus. There on our knees, we say, "Dear Lord, open mine eyes. Help me to behold You. Speak to my heart. Make the vision clear. Make it plain. And, as we kneel there, we open the Word—the Bible. Remember, where are we? On our knees, alone with God. We open the Bible. You say, "Where?" Ask God to guide you. But there's a special part of the Bible that will help you in beholding—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Four different men wrote the life of Jesus. And the life of Jesus was written that you and I might behold Him. In the four Gospels, we have the life of Jesus as viewed from four different directions. If you had somebody who would take a picture of a man from the front, from the right side, from the left side, and from the back, you'd have it, wouldn't you? And so, here on our knees, perhaps this morning, we're reading in John. I love the Gospel of John (I love them all, but there's something about that Gospel of John that grips me).

I've directed your attention to a special part of the Bible. Let me next direct your attention to a special part of those four Gospels. It has to do with the closing week of Christ's life. You'll find that a large number of the chapters in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have to do with the last week of Christ's life. And then to pinpoint it still more, you'll find that there are more words devoted by all the Gospel

writers to the last 24 hours of Jesus' life than *any* other life period in all the Bible. Why is this? Because this is the most important thing for us to behold.

Suppose you're reading in John. Let's turn to it right now, will you? The 19th chapter of John. Chapters 13 through 19 all deal with the last 24 hours of the life of Jesus. We'll take the 19th chapter now. We're down on our knees, and we've asked God to help us to behold. In your imagination, will you with me be on your knees alone with God, with the open Bible? And in that posture, and in that state of mind, let's listen and look. We're looking at John 19:1

"Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him"
John 19:1.

Now, I've read this, and I'm all alone with God. I close my eyes, and I say, "Dear Jesus, help me to see this." Now, what does scourging mean? Any of you boys and girls ever get a whipping? You've never got one like this. The whip they whipped Jesus with was made of long strips of leather with pieces of steel, cutting steel, braided into the leather. And every time that soldier lifted up that whip, with those many pieces of leather, and laid it on the bare back of the blessed Lord, it cut deep.

May I make one request this morning? If everybody is as still as possible, pay no attention to any interruption. The enemy would like to interrupt this and cause you to miss the very point you need most. Will you cooperate? And listen friends, I'll tell you this: this is all good practice. Because, when you get down on your knees alone with God, even if there's nothing terrestrial to interrupt, you'll find, in spite of your best efforts, your mind wandering off here, there, and yonder. But I have a statement for you on that, that I'd just as well give you right now because it bears on where we are right now in our study this morning:

"If the mind wanders, bring it back" *Messages to Young People*, page 115.

So, when you attempt to do what I'm studying with you this morning, and you find your mind wandering, remember I read it to you. It could happen. Don't feel, "Well, I guess I'm not on track. I guess this doesn't work for me." Yes, it's working. "If the mind wanders," do what? "Bring it back."

Now, we were interrupted, and we're going to come back now, just like this says. "If the mind wanders, bring it back." Where are we? We're back here to John 19:1. Let's read it together:

"Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him"
John 19:1.

And scourging means what? Whipping.

Now, as I'm on my knees, I may say nothing for a moment. I may just kneel there, I've read the words. I may just kneel and try to get the picture. Jesus, the Son of God in human flesh, there He is, and they're scourging Him, whipping Him.

The first time they put the whip on, it draws blood. And the next time, and the next time, until His back is just a mass of lacerations and wounds. I say, "Oh, God, is that what you did for me? Help me to see it. Help me to feel it." We're not in a hurry. We're not trying to read the Bible through in so many days. We're not even trying to get through this chapter. No, no. We're lingering. We're doing what? Beholding. Beholding. Perhaps our minds will run to Isaiah 53:5:

"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" Isaiah 53:5.

What does chastisement mean? Whipping.

And so, we talk to God, there on our knees. Sometimes, we're just kneeling there for a moment or two or three, just thinking, looking. And our hearts cry out, "Oh, God, make this real to me. Help me to see what my salvation costs. Help me to see that it was my sin that did this. Then we come back, and we read the second verse. Will you read it with me?

"And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe"
John 19:2.

Again, I close my eyes, and I see Jesus this time with that purple robe, and what on His head? A crown of thorns. They pressed it on His head, and somebody's taken a stick and cracked it over His head, driving down that crown of thorns into the skin and flesh. And the blood is flowing down His temples. "Oh, God, help me to see it. Help me to sense it. Make it real to me. And help me to see what it means that He was *wounded* for my transgressions, He was *bruised* for *my* iniquities."

But my mind may wander off. I may be thinking about the dinner I've got to cook today, or the lesson I've got to give, or any one of 10,000 problems. But what did we read there? "If the mind wanders, bring it back." Don't misunderstand me. There's a time to talk to God about all those problems. I'd suggest the time to talk to Him about them is *after* you've done what we're doing this morning.

First, *behold* Him, and keep on until two things have happened: one is, we are sorry for sin; the other is, we know He's forgiven us. It is by beholding Him moment after moment, verse after verse. It is by thus beholding Him that the terrible nature of sin becomes more and more real to us, and we long to be clear away from it. You see, dear friends, the reason we sin over and over is because we *want* to. "Oh," somebody says, "But I don't *want* to." Then why do you do it?

Suppose this were a hot stove, and I've got my hand on it, and I say, "Oh, it just hurts me." What would you say? "Why don't you take your hand off it if it hurts you so bad?" You'd know it wasn't hurting me very much, or I'd quit. Wouldn't you? It's that simple. Jesus longs to give us the victory over sin. But listen. It's not going to come by going to sleep some night and God working a miracle while we sleep, and we wake up the next morning and never want it again. Oh, no. The place that

sin is cured is at the cross. It is as we behold that the things that used to make us laugh make us cry. The things in which we used to get fun no longer seem funny.

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

May I be very frank and specific? Some of us are much inclined to primp. I saw a sign the other day along the road; it was a place where people go. The name of it was Park and Primp. They have various names. Some people go and spend money to have other people fix them up; some people spend money and time at home. Don't misunderstand me. Somebody may say, "Don't you think we ought to be attractive?" Yes. I think Christian men and Christian women should certainly seek to reflect honor on their Creator. But honestly, friends, many of the things that appear today certainly reflect no honor on the Creator, for He didn't create them at all. He didn't create them that way at all.

Years ago, right here in Michigan, the Lord's messenger was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write a message to the young people, right here in this state. You'll find it here in *Volume 1* in a wonderful chapter. Page 162, I read this:

"The young are often urged to due duty, to speak or pray in meeting; urged to die to pride. Such religion is worth nothing. Let the carnal heart be changed, and it will not be such drudgery, ye coldhearted professors, to serve God. All that love of dress and pride of appearance will be gone" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 1*, page 162.

It will be what? Gone. Ladies, did you ever try to get some spot or stain out of something, and finally, you found the right thing that would take the stain out, and you were amazed at how it took it out? Well, this is it, friends. Beholding Christ upon the cross will take out the pride of dress, pride of appearance, pride of opinion, the pride of anything and everything. This is the cure.

"The time that you spend standing before the glass preparing the hair to please the eye, should be devoted to prayer and searching of heart. There will be no place for outward adornment in the sanctified heart" *Ibid.*

Somebody may say, "I guess Brother Frazee doesn't like the way I look." Why, my dear friend, what Brother Frazee thinks has nothing remotely to do with it. We're coming to Calvary this morning, and I'm reading you inspired words. And I wouldn't give two cents for a change of dress or of hair or anything else unless it were inspired by a season at Calvary. But you can afford to follow the promptings of the Spirit that come as you kneel there at the foot of the cross.

Now, we were reading also this morning, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

Turn to Exodus 20. Now we're in another session in our imagination. This morning we're reading, not in John, but in Exodus. The whole Bible is given to us to study and meditate on. But the two things especially that we need to study on our knees, are the life of Christ and the law of God. We're down on our knees, with the open Bible, and we're praying. Before we read, we're praying, "Oh, God, open my eyes, that I will see something more in Thy law than I've ever seen before." We're asking for help, and we're expecting it. We begin with the First Commandment, the third verse. Will you read it with me?

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" Exodus 20:3.

I close my eyes. I say, "Oh, dear Lord, help me to see more in this commandment than I've ever seen before. As I kneel here quietly, talk to my heart. Is there anything in my life that I'm making a god out of? My wife? My husband? My brother? My sister? My friend? Is there any earthly object that's coming between You and me?"

I keep looking into that law. Will God talk to me? Oh yes. God will say things to me that nobody else would dare say to me. God will reprove me for things that other people either don't know about or they would think it was meddling to say to me. It probably would be meddling, some of them. But it's not meddling for God. But God may not meddle with you unless you open the way for Him to. Remember, you're doing what? Beholding.

Take the commandments one by one. Some of us have times that we don't sleep straight through the night. Any of you have that problem? Listen. Here's a wonderful task to fill those moments with what we're talking about. When I awake in the night, I like to turn my mind either to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah on the death and sufferings of Jesus, or the Ten Commandments, or some other part of Scripture. Go down through those Ten Commandments, talking to God back and forth as He talks to me through this law. That's the way, my dear friends, to be happy. It says so in the first Psalm. The word 'blessed' translated means 'happy.'

"Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" Psalm 1:1-2.

This is the beholding, you see. Day and night.

Now, dear ones, I told you how to begin this morning. There are many variations of it. God will have His own peculiar way to deal with you. But I'll tell you this: If you give Him the time and the effort, He'll give you the blessing. Yes, He will.

In this chapter that I was reading from in *Volume 1* addressed to the young people, that Sister White wrote here in Michigan, is this statement on page 158:

"I saw how this grace could be obtained. Go to your

closet, and there alone plead with God: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.' Be in earnest, be sincere. Fervent prayer availeth much. ... Agonize. Jesus, in the garden, sweat great drops of blood; you must make an effort."
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 1, page 158.

Friends, until I got hold of what I've been telling you about having the open Bible and reading about the life of Jesus and the law, I'd soon run out of words. After all, after you've asked God for this and this, pretty soon you come to the bottom of your little cup, *then* what do you do? This is where opening the Bible gives you something more to think about and to pray about. And thus, you can have as long a visit with God as your time permits, and as your need requires. If you just kneel down and pray, you'll either be like a tape recorder that's just going through a certain form of words, or else you may soon run out. But doing it as I've studied with you this morning, oh, what a blessing.

"Do not leave your closet until you feel strong in God" *Ibid.*

Then in the same chapter:

"*Remain* before God" *Ibid.*, page 163.

What does 'remain' mean? Stay there.

"*until* unutterable longings are begotten within you for salvation, and the sweet evidence is obtained of pardoned sin" *Ibid.*

Now, there's another point that I must put with all of this. We are to mix faith with our prayers, and faith is believing God. When I come to God, I must believe that He's going to hear me and grant me an audience. When I ask Him to give me sorrow for sin, I must say, "Lord, I believe You will. I believe You're doing it." When I'm there on my knees, behold His love and His law, as I ask Him to write this law in my heart, I must believe and say, "Lord, I believe You're doing it." When I confess my sins, before I get up from my knees, I must say, "Lord, I see You love me, and I believe You've done what You said You would do. I believe You forgive me and accept me."

Pray until that's settled in your mind—that you know that God has heard your prayer. And listen, that doesn't mean that you're to pray there on your knees until you get a wave of *feeling* that makes you know. Not at all. You are to pray there until, by faith, you have said, "Lord, I *do* believe, I *will* believe, and I believe right now." That's an act of your *will*. An act of your will. And your faith power, like your muscle power, grows by exercise.

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W. D. Frazee Sermons
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org