

Worker Sermons

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Garrett Hughes

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Convention Farm

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I hardly know anyone here, but wherever we go, whatever the customs, and whatever the language, God's people are one.

I want to tell you about a verse that has been speaking to me more and more in some of the other special meetings and conventions, and that is Romans 13:11 where it says, "And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Now it is high time!

We might think when Paul wrote that verse to those people, he was writing to people who weren't doing very well, but he was writing to the people at Rome, and he said their faith was known throughout the whole world. They had a good testimony, and they were doing all right, but when he wrote to them, he said it is high time to wake out of sleep. It is high time.

I went to a place not too long ago, and I was late for dinner. The lady didn't say too much about it, but she did say, it's high time that you got here: Your dinner is getting cold. That is high time.

It is time that we understand the time in which we live. It is hard for us to take it in as we should the time in which we are living. Never in the world's history has there been a time like this we are living in.

That's why I like to talk to the children. I'd like for the children sometime to read the last three verses of Psalm 48. It says, "Walk about Zion and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death."

I was glad for what we heard from the Psalms this morning. I enjoy the Psalms, but the more I read them, the more I wonder when did David ever find the time to write those Psalms? We can't find time to read them sometime, but David with all his responsibility, just imagine: He had a home and a family. That's about enough to keep most people busy. He was ruler over millions of people, and that's a big responsibility. He was the commander in Chief of the Army of about two hundred thousand men, and if that wasn't enough, he was the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He was the Supreme Court, yet he had time to write more than half of those Psalms. Of 150 Psalms, he wrote nearly 80 that have his name on them. I still wonder where he got the time.

I would like to say to you young people, be careful what you read, will you? I always liked to read when I was growing up. There was never anything in our home that wasn't good to read, but when I made my choice in my teens, I found out I didn't have time for that stuff. My folks had a paper that came once a week, and it had continued stories in it. Each week the story would quit at the most exciting time, and I would have to wait a whole week to find out how it would turn out! This world is full of stuff to read, and we've got to watch what we read. All this stuff flying around—it's not all bad either, but it takes our time, and we don't have the time. It is high time for us to wake up.

I want to tell you something that has been very real to me lately about the time in which we are living. Never has there been anything in the world's history like this—a time when we can go around the world! I went out to find something in the Books in the Old Testament to find what we have now.

When you go home I am going to ask you to read the 2nd chapter in the Book of Daniel, and see where you find yourself in it. That is quite a story. King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and the dream bothered him. He called all the wise men he could get ahold of, and they couldn't interpret it. He was going to kill all the wise men. Then Daniel heard about it, and he went to the king and asked him to give them awhile, and give them a chance. Then Daniel and his companions prayed about it, and God gave them the answer to the dream.

That dream Nebuchadnezzar had was not complicated at all. It was not hard to understand. It was just plain faith. He told that king the image that was set up and the head was gold, the breast and arms silver, the belly and thighs brass, legs of iron and feet part iron and part clay. He saw a stone that was cut out without hands that smote the image and broke it to pieces. The iron, clay, brass, silver and gold were broken and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. You can read that in the 35th verse of the 2nd chapter of the Book of Daniel. The 44th verse in that Chapter is a prophesy that relates to us. Some people might think it happened then. Remember we were just singing in Hymn 283 that "All the kingdoms of the earth, all their pride and power, shall be humbled to the dust, in that promised hour." That is when Jesus comes back.

When Jesus comes back, that's what is going to happen. That is what happened in the 2nd chapter of the Book of Daniel, and that stone smashed the whole mountain and filled the earth. In the 44th verse it says, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of

heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people but it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms and it shall stand for ever." He is talking about our day. He is talking about you and me and what we are in now. That is the kingdom that He is going to set up and it will fill the whole earth.

That never happened in Jesus' day.

Jesus told his disciples to be respectful to rulers, to be good citizens, and to do what they were supposed to do, and do it that way. That is the kingdom that is going to be set up some day, and He is going to be King over that kingdom. I like those verses that speak about what is going to happen when Jesus comes back.

Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar in Verse 38 you are the head of gold. If you want to read Daniel 5, you will find out what happened to that kingdom. He was having a good old time and drinking out of those chosen vessels of God, and while he was doing that, the Medes and Persians sneaked under the wall and took the kingdom over. That was the Medes and Persians. If you want to read the 8th chapter of the Book of Daniel, you will see the Greeks coming in, and after the Greeks, the Roman Empire. Never in the world's history has any Empire stood up and lasted as long as the Roman Empire. It was long before Jesus came, and long after Jesus was here. Just one Ceasar after another, and Jesus was there during the Roman Empire.

Now you get down to the feet and the toes. That is the time we are living in. Such a messed up affair: The world is in that shape right now, and that's what's going on right now.

Let me tell you something, we have a great responsibility. It is wonderful to be in this meeting, and wonderful to be in God's way, but I wonder, my brother and my sister if we really take our responsibility as we should? Do you know what happened after Jesus' time? This whole thing began to fade away. And already in John's day, less than 100 years after Jesus died, they began to doubt that Jesus died! John was the only one who warned us of the antichrist. Already in John's day things began to fade away and fade away, even then. Christ promised He is going to set up a kingdom on this earth.

You know what has happened in the world now? The last two countries that hadn't opened up to the gospel have opened up— China, and that one country down there in South America, Equador . Christ is going to set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed and it will stand forever. We have the responsibility of keeping that kingdom in good shape and keeping that house together till He comes back. (Read Matthew 24:14)

I would like to ask you to read something else. It is the last part of the 13th chapter of Mark. I'm not going to speak about that, but it has been in my mind a long time. Jesus spoke of a man taking a far journey and he left his house. That wasn't a building. Hebrews 3:6 says whose house are we and so forth. We are His house. It's not a building. It is the people. He says he left his house, and he left three things with that house and you can read it, and keep that house in good shape till He comes back.

He left his house and he gave authority to his servants, to every man his work, and he commanded the porter to watch. I want to tell you something. That is a very serious verse to me and it has been for a long time. That is where you and I come in that we have a part to do to keep our house in good order for He is going to come back one of these times and we want Him to find our house in good order.

Three things he said. He gave authority to his servants. May I ask you where the servants first had authority? I first read that verse a long time ago. It says he gave authority to his servants. In every letter that Paul wrote, he said I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. In the New Testament, He gave authority to his servants, He gave every man his work and commanded the porter to watch. I want to ask you something. Who does the watching? Who is the porter?

I was glad for what we heard from the Psalms this morning. I am going to tell you about a verse or two in the 48th Psalm. I've been going to that quite often. In that Psalm it tells us about what's going on. It says "Walk about Zion and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces." Why? That ye may tell it to the generation following.

The first thing it says is tell the towers. Do you know what those towers are? There was a wall all around Jerusalem and a watchtower and a watchman in that tower, but he was watching what went on outside. It's what happens inside that wall that brings the trouble. The watchman is very limited in what he can do. They can't see everything.

I'm going to ask you to read Psalm 127 sometime. Verse 1 says "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." That is where our responsibility comes in. Do we want our house in good shape when He comes back? That is where our responsibility lies. They didn't go to Babylon because the watchmen didn't watch. They went down to Babylon seventy years, but it wasn't the watchmen's fault.

I'm going to tell you something. That's where every person in this meeting comes in and that is the thing that is going to keep this house in good order. It's all right to have watchmen. It's all right to have the servants of God, but the one thing that will keep this house in good order is your responsibility and mine to watch. He commanded the porter to watch.

There is another place in the New Testament where it tells us about the porter, and that is where Jesus was talking about the shepherd and the sheep in John 10. He said I am the good shepherd and to him the porter openeth. That is the Holy Spirit. I am glad we have a hymn in the book (312) that tells us about the Holy Spirit. I'm not out of my place when I say that is where we stand, and we hope and expect that God is going to come back some of these times.

Oh, my brother and my sister, may He find this house in good order. That is what we want it to be, and when we leave this meeting, it is a personal responsibility of everyone of us, young or old, to know dealings of the Holy Spirit. **The watchmen can't be going**

around and looking under beds for television. Television is the devil's masterpiece if there ever was anything in this world that is!

When I was a boy, workers could get a school house out in the country and have meetings six nights a week for three or four weeks and the mission was worked and people professed and went on. Not anymore. We've got people over there in Colorado coming to meetings for four or five years and they know it is right. **They know it is God's only way**, but they have not done anything yet. Maybe they will sometime.

Some say it is easier for young workers now. We say, how do you mean it is easier? Well, they say, they don't have to walk so much. It takes more faith and more courage and more of the love of God all the time to go out in the world and face the indifference and all that is going on and that is the way it goes.

We want to keep our house in good order and that is where our responsibility comes, and we want to leave this meeting, me too, with our first and personal responsibility to know the dealings of the Holy Spirit. If we do that, our house is going to be in good order when He comes back and the time is getting nearer all the time.

I was over there in California when they were working on the new hymn book. Workers from all over the world were there and we did have good fellowship together. I said we don't want to take out any of the hymns in the book that speak about Christ's return and when He is coming back. They help us to understand and to know that He is coming back. They help us understand what will happen. We have a part in that too, and the day is drawing near.

I told them about what is happening there in the Middle West where all those bombs are hid away. You go down some of those roads there in Colorado and Wyoming and you see a little fenced in place off from the road. That is where they have those big bombs, just waiting to be set off to go all over the place. If they are ever set off, that will be the end of the whole civilization in this world. They are right there but God is watching it all.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:37-41, like it was in the days of Noah, eating, drinking and giving in marriage until the day Noah entered the ark and the flood came and took them all away. That is what He said, and He said two shall be in the field, one shall be taken and the other left. Two grinding at the mill, one taken and the other left. Just come right then! That is what He said He is going to do. We'd better be prepared for it.

Maybe I shouldn't be talking about it, but it is a personal responsibility with me anyway. We go around to different places for special meetings and conventions. We are so glad to see God's people and all that, but behind the whole thing is a fear lest we get careless. Do you know what the most dangerous thing in the whole world is? It is carelessness. That is one of the marks of Babylon. Carelessness is the worst danger in the world. Just to be careless on the road! There is no place in God's kingdom anywhere for anybody to be careless spiritually or naturally. Those things are there to help us look at things as they are.

I have been reading Matthew 24 and 25 about the last meeting Jesus had with the disciples up there on the mountain. I won't say much about it, but I would like for you to read it. I think you will find it good and helpful to read. It was in that last meeting that He told them so many things that are going to be a help and things to watch for and to be warned against. I read it last night. I wasn't just thinking about the meeting when I read it last night. I keep on reading it. He left many things with the disciples. Maybe we don't read it enough to know what He left with them, and what He told them about when He is going to come back.

He said in Matthew 24:30 that the Son of man is going to come in the clouds of heaven when the last trumpet shall sound. You know, we can read that in the Bible and not think much about it? Did you ever read that? What does it mean that He shall come in the clouds of heaven?

Off there in North Dakota, where I lived, there is not much scenery. My old friend, Jimmie Jardine used to tease me a little bit and say it is the farthest to look and the least to see of any place he had ever been! I had to tell Jim something. I told Jim the middle west is noted for its brilliant sunrises and sunsets! We still have nice sunrises and sunsets out there in North Dakota.

Do you know what makes it so wonderful? It is the clouds. The sun shining on the clouds. And what are the clouds, eh? How do the clouds get up there? You know how they got there? The sun shined on all the wet places in the world. It shined on the sea and vaporized that water and left the salt behind. It shined on the bogs and the swamps and vaporized it and made the clouds. That's God's people. And I claim that is what is in the world today. The Son is already shining on the clouds. You can look out there in the East and see the Son is shining there on the clouds. The Son is going to rise and sure enough, and that is where we are today. The clouds are God's people separated from everything they have been in. I love those verses. He is coming in the clouds and every eye shall see Him.

I am going to tell you a little about another meeting Jesus had with the disciples. I read that not long ago. It takes in five chapters in John, the 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th and the 17th, and that is the last prayer that Jesus had with the disciples. Oh, my brother and my sister, I wish you would read those chapters more.

I don't know of any chapter in the Bible that I think of more often then the 17th chapter of John. I don't think a day goes by that I don't think about that prayer. You know why? Because He was praying for you and me as well as everyone else.

A little girl came up to me one time not long ago. She was ten or eleven years old and she was professing. I wrote her name in a kind of fancy writing on a piece of paper for her. After awhile she came back and asked me to put my favorite verse on the back of that piece of paper. Do any of you folks have a favorite verse? Do you? It didn't take me long to tell her what my favorite verse is.

When Jesus was praying that last prayer, He lifted up His eyes to heaven and said "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," and then the 3rd verse, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Oh, my brother and my sister, when you read it, will you think about it and find yourself in it? That is the 3rd verse. "This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." It tells us how we can get to know God ourselves.

Do you want another verse to go with that? Acts 17:27 says, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him though he be not far from every one of us." It tells us how we can get to know God ourselves.

Suppose my Dad were alive and living in Denver. I could tell you a lot about him, who he was, what he looked like and a lot about him, but you would have to go to that address. You'd have to ring the bell and get to see him. Then you could say I know him. You can know a lot about God in heaven, but you've got to do something yourself. There are a few things the preachers can't do for you, and that's Acts 17:27 and the verse to think on.

Paul was there in Athens, up there on Mars Hill and he preached to them and told them God made the heavens and the earth and everything therein **and he doesn't dwell in temples made with hands**. He isn't worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things and made of one blood all nations to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed. Why? Why did He do that? Why did He make the world? You know we don't have much of an answer sometime.

Why did God make the world? He made the world for you and me to live in. Then He put us here, and why did He put us here? He put us here so He could live in our hearts. That verse tells us how we get to know the Lord. "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us."

That is some verse now. That is how we get to know the Lord. We've got to do that ourselves. What we do after the meeting is going to mean so much to us.

Do you know one of the hardest things to get people to do? They will come to gospel meetings, but what do they do after the meetings? What do we do after the Sunday morning meetings? What we do after the meetings determines what we get out of the meetings. That is what that verse says, that we should seek the Lord though He be not far from us.

Jesus said in John 17: 2 & 3, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Why did He put that in? We can slip over these things and not give them much thought. Why did He say, "and Jesus Christ"? You know why He said that? In John 1: 10 & 11 it says, "He was in the world and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Listen, my brother and my sister, what did He mean when He said in John 17:4, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do"? We can read so carelessly sometime. Find out. What was that work? Why was it necessary for Jesus to be born like He was? Born in a stable and cradled in the manger. He worked as a carpenter there in Nazareth til He was 30 years old, then left His home, left His tools, and left everything behind and went out for over three years to preach the gospel. Why?

My first companion, Walter Jardine, used to tell us seven things Jesus spoke on the cross, and I never got away from it.

The first words Jesus spoke when He was on the cross is when He said (Luke 23:34) "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." That doesn't mean they were forgiven, but they would be forgiven if they didn't know what they were doing.

Then, there was a thief on one side, and a thief on the other side. One was railing on Jesus. The other thief spoke up and said to his fellow thief, we're not doing the right thing. This man has done nothing. We are suffering the due reward of our deed. He turned to Jesus and said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." He called Jesus Lord. Then Jesus said (Luke 23:43) "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Jesus looked down at the foot of the cross, and His mother was standing there. John was standing there. He said to His mother, (John 19:26) "Woman, behold thy son." Then He said to John (John 19:27) "Behold thy mother." In your Bible, it says he took her to his own home, but that is not right. Home is an added word that doesn't belong there. He took her to his own people. John didn't have a home.

Then it got dark! Oh, my brother and my sister, if we could put ourselves in this. You read the 22nd Psalm. That is the crucifixion chapter in the Bible. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me?" Then three hours of darkness! God hid His face.

I was in a meeting one time, and a man was trying to tell us what caused Jesus' death. He was taking the words of some of those know-it-all doctors, and he said the last thing that happens is your head falls down and you strangle to death!

Jesus chose the moment of His death. Man had nothing to do with His birth, and man had nothing to do with His death. Just like old Sam Charlton said from the 6th hour til the 9th hour was long enough. **He tasted hell for you and me for a little while**, but the darkness passed away and the light came and He is praising God.

Jesus said (John 19:28) "I thirst." He said (John 19:30) "It is finished." Then He said (Luke 23:16) "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and He bowed His head and died.

We had better wake up to some of these things. Why were those things necessary? Why did He come here and be born as He was? It was that He might be our mediator. I will read a verse to you (I Tim. 2:5) "For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

Do you know if we come to God, there has to be a mediator? Do you know as we live here in this world we are enemies with God? When we come to God we've got to have someone to plead our case. He came to be our mediator. He had to understand one side just as much as the other.

I'll tell you something else about that prayer in John 17:18, He prayed, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." They talk about preachers and ministers and all that kind of stuff. They've got to go to school and they've got to do this and do that! If there wasn't anything else in the Bible about how the servants of God are supposed to go, it would be enough. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." And, after Jesus rose from the dead, He said (John 20:21) "Peace be unto you. As my father hath sent me, even so send I you," and we know how He went. He left His home and everything behind, and He sent those servants just the same way.

I want to tell you something else in that prayer in John 17.

Six times He prayed that they all might be one—those few He left behind. Just eleven now. He prayed that they all might be one, but more than that He said (John 17:21 & 22), "That they all might be one, as thou Father art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gayest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one."

Oh, my brother and my sister, I wonder if we can take it in? Some of us go around to special meetings and conventions. I figured out one time I had listened to about 22 different languages. In every one of those places there was a language all its own. You couldn't mistake it. I wonder if we could wake up to the fact that all around the world today there is a people and those people are one in Christ? Some of these days He is going to sound the trumpet, and He is coming back and will gather His people from the far corners, from heaven and earth and they will be one with Him eternally.

Looking at you folks, we are one together now, but we are one with all God's people who have gone before, and we are one with all who will come afterwards.

Some of us went to Australia first time a few years ago. Those fields of wheat there produce 50 bushels to the acre, but there was no wheat there until the white men went there. They sowed wheat, and they got wheat just like they did two thousand years ago. They went there in the early days of this century and they sowed the seed of the gospel and it brought forth fruit there just like the fruit brought forth two thousand years ago . We'd better wake up to what's going on in this world.

I came to this meeting thinking about you folks. You didn't take the bread and wine today, did you? I haven't had a chance to do that for awhile now. When we have to go to special meetings and conventions all the time we miss it. I will be glad when I have a chance to do so again. It means so much more to us.

There is a little Hymn we don't sing very often. I'm going to ask you to sing the first two verses of Hymn 288. It might remind us of what the Lord thinks about the first day of the week. It says,

If we but knew the cost at which He came,
The price whereby the veil was rent in twain,
Would we not praise as angels praise His name?
If we but knew.

If we but knew the sorrow and the loss,
The lonely hours, the garden, yea, the cross;
Before such love all else would be as dross,
If we but knew.

Those first two verses of that little Hymn is the cup. And that cup tells us about His death. The blood that was shed that brings forgiveness to our sins. Your sins are not forgiven just by the preacher. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins." (Col. 1:14)

The bread is life. Jesus said, "I am that bread of life." (John 6:48) And we are the bread of life too. He just took a little bread and He fed five thousand people.

Listen, my brother and my sister, you are going out into a hungry world. You think you don't have very much to give them, but you have something that is going to feed their hungry hearts, and it will grow and grow.