For the Things Not Seen

You being here today is a testimony to two things. First, it declares His name in the midst of the congregation. We are only here as a declaration of His keeping power, of His calling, of His anointing. The fact that we're here is a response to God, but it is also a declaration of Him to one another, that I'm here because of intent, that I'm here because of hope. It's a pretty good message that we're preaching, just by being here. What did somebody say, "Preach Christ all you can, and then if you need to use words do so." It's also a declaration of our hope. We are not only here as a statement that God has brought us into Christ, but we are still here because we know in ourselves that we are not "finished." I think the full testimony to what God is looking for is that we "finish." So we are here as a statement, but we are also here in hope.

In Jeremiah, the 32nd chapter, the 17th verse: *Ah, LORD, God, behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.* There is a testimony of God's capacity just by what is made, but it is not a full testimony to His intent. In Romans 1:20 it says, the unseen things of Him ...those things that are seen are a declaration that clearly testify to His eternal power and God-head. But you cannot fully grasp what He is by understanding what you see. No matter how long you stare at a tree you'll never come to understand the Plan of God without a revealing by the Holy Spirit.

In the course of creation, most things were made by His word. Genesis tells us that God said, "He saw, and it was good." But that isn't how He made man. He didn't make man by saying, "Let there be man." He took of the dust of the earth, shaped it, breathed into it. There was a different process by which He created man. It was a "hands-on" approach. It's a process that's very "hands-on" by which He wants to finish us as His sons.

Paul testifies to it saying, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Oh, and there's more, Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will impute righteousness without works." Boy, this keeps getting better. But there's a point in which what God has done for us is limited in its benefit to us if we don't begin to co-labor. We can see the testimony to this in the seven feasts of Israel. If you google the seven feasts of Israel, and you pull it up, you are probably going to get an evangelical view of what those seven feasts are. The first four feasts are all going to have "Fulfilled" stamped on them. Everybody recognizes that those first four feasts including the feast of Pentecost have been fulfilled, but the last three feasts don't have that stamp on them as far as the evangelical world is concerned. So, the feast of Trumpets, the feast of Atonement, and the feast of Booths aren't fulfilled, in their view. I don't know that I would completely disagree with that. What is stamped over the feast of Trumpets is the word "Rapture," and then the feast of Atonement and the feast of Booths have a question mark over them. I understand why it is there. God hasn't revealed those things to them. They are going to have an encounter with their "rapture" being wrong and their questions being answered by the manifestation of what's "finished" because it has to have "Fulfilled" stamped on it before it's going to have an effect for the masses. It's just the way it is. It isn't my program; I didn't make it up.

One of the cleanest testimonies to this place that we are in is Gideon's three hundred. It went from 32,000 to 300. Don't mourn the shrinkage. David DiGloria said, "Who told the church that judgment was a negative issue?" Where did we get convinced that judgment was harsh and it was for our detriment, that we should shield ourselves against the judgement? If we're not finished and we don't take judgment for where we're not, how are we going to get home? Righteousness is established in the foundation of judgment. We sang it this morning: "Create in me a clean heart, O God!" Where it says, "Take not Your Holy Spirit from me," it's not because He is going to take him: the gifts and the callings are clearly represented that they are without repentance. Then what does it mean, "Take not Your Holy Spirit from me?" The effectiveness and practical application of His Spirit. All things are upheld by the presence of His Spirit. If He were to take His Spirit, things would just dissolve! They are upheld through the word of His power through the Spirit. If He takes His Spirit from anything, it is just as if it never was. The removal of God's Spirit is anti-matter. David testified that no matter where he went God was there. He's not going to "take His Spirit," for that Spirit is omnipresent, but we need to be involved with His Spirit for purpose, that we be established in the present reality of God in our lives today. "God, what do you need to do in me today so that tomorrow is a new day?"

This new man has to be renewed daily. Jesus wasn't on "auto-pilot." He didn't say to God, "I've got this. Look at that, I can do miracles. OK, Dad, I've got this." He did the miracles; he healed them all; he cast out the devils, and he spent the night in petition and prayer. It wasn't for power to heal; he had already done that. If that was all he was in it for, he had no further need for prayer and supplication. He was still anchored by what God was in him and his testimony was that "the works that I do are not my works! They are the Father's works. I'm not here to declare myself. I'm here to declare Him." Paul caught it. He said that it was God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. It wasn't Christ reconciling; it was God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. A very clear declaration of that is in Acts (I think it is 20:28.), when the exhortation comes to those God has anointed to lead God's people and to shepherd them. He said, "You better be careful because that is God's bride, and He has purchased it with his own blood." This isn't said to establish a controversy – when the spear pierced Jesus's side, whose blood flowed on the ground? – it's saying that it was God's life that was sustaining Christ; he didn't live life out of himself. He said, "I live by the Father." We are here as a testimony of what God has done, but we are also here because there's a hope that He is going to finish and that there will be a full, not just a partial testimony, to His capacity.

Micah 7:7-9 (v.9): I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him,... How long? How long shall this go on? What is this season of bearing His indignation? ... until He plead my cause,... until the word that He is speaking is not a word of correction, is not a word of chastening, is not a scourging toward me but because it has fulfilled what it objects to in me. It can now be a clear, transparent expression through me. See, we have wanted to cut things short. The church wants to go declare, so they push baby Christians to the streets with tracts as a testimony to the salvation of God. It's not wrong. We all have to be purged of what we thought. You don't want to rain on their parade, but you do recognize that it's a little boy in front of a mirror with his daddy's coat hanging about twelve inches off his hands. I saw on the cover of Post Magazine a cute little representation by Norman Rockwell, but the child doesn't see the coat hanging off his hands; he sees his "dad." We've done it in good faith; we've done it out of our ignorance. He winked at it in the days of our ignorance, but He's left His Holy Spirit and His testimony in our midst to bring us out of this. ... *until He plead my* cause and execute judgment for meⁱ... Oh, that is nice.

David cried out in the Psalms, "When will You avenge me of my enemies; how long are you going to leave me subject to the adversary?" My enemies are within and without; they are not just outside me. My primary enemy is right in here. When am I going to be relieved of these enemies? When are You going to avenge me of my enemies? When are You going to put them down instead of You making me subject to them? You will execute judgment for me? This is coming up into the sunlight! ...and He will bring me forth to the light... and what I will behold in that state is not Job – self-righteousness, but His righteousness because He will have formed.... In Isaiah, the LORD through the prophet says to Israel something that I think is gaining traction in our own hearts: Thy Maker is thy Husband. The testimony to the natural creation is a testimony to His capacity, but the intent of His capacity is to wed us and birth in us His life. I have to say that from within myself, looking at His life being established in me, that is more difficult for me to believe than that He created the worlds by His word. So He did that to establish a marker for His capacity. He anchored some of His covenants with man and said: The heavens and the earth will pass away, but My word shall not pass away. It doesn't mean He is going to destroy the planet. What it means is that in terms of priorities, until you see the sun not rise tomorrow morning, don't worry about what I said because that's going to happen before that doesn't happen. The sun is going to NOT come up before My word is going to be invalid. He has anchored our confidence in fact – every day the sun comes up. You can trust Me. What I'm going to do is that I am going to bring into manifestation something that has never been seen. So, the danger of only having confidence based on what He's done, as opposed to gaining confidence in HIM because of what He's done, keeps us from going forward into an expression of what hasn't happened yet.

The cleansing of the conscience is very important because if we still position ourselves on the basis of what we have been, we keep ourselves from becoming what it is that He wants to bring forth. It's not the conscience of guilt so much; but if that hasn't yielded yet, if we can't walk without condemnation from the past, how are we thinking that we are embracing faith for the future? Sin isn't going to yield before condemnation does. If the effect of sin hasn't been overcome, how is sin going to yield? It's kind of like, if you can't run with the foot men, how are you going to do when the chariots get here? You're not going to deal with causes if you can't deal with the effect. There's no condemnation – that's a marker. It's an important testimony to the advancing of the purpose of God in my life. Paul didn't forget that he persecuted the church, but he didn't walk under condemnation for having done it. But he was forever humbled by it. He said, "I persecuted the church I was called to nourish. In myself, I don't have what it takes; but if I'm dependent upon Him and what He has established in me, now I have a right to speak to the church – not out of my own sufficiency but of Him within me and my dependency upon that that is Him."

The testimony of what is seen is a foundation for the authority and the intent of what is not seen. Hebrews 11:3, "We know by faith that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that which is seen is made out of those things which do not appear." He has established that as a testimony to us because He wants to bring

an appearance out of that which is not already seen in us through the on-going work of His Spirit.

Think of the gradual approach in Paul's definition of what God wants to do for those who love Him. He said, "Eye hath not seen." I don't know how distant "seen" would be by definition – an eagle can see a long way. I can see a little bit; I can see something that is proximate to me or I can see something that is right here. But "Eye hasn't seen;" He has to bring a vision because if we don't see it, why would we hope for what we don't have faith in? It also says that "Ear hasn't heard" – it begins to have an entrance. David said, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but my ear Thou hast opened." It begins to seep in under the corners, His testimony, you know, as indistinct and as frail as it may be to His ultimate purpose.

Then Paul says, "Neither has it entered into the heart of man." If there is one thing I have learned over the last ten years, it is that my heart is always the target – in every situation, whether I'm offending or whether I've been offended. My heart is the target! The declaration of Jesus was, "If you know your brother is offended with you, go to your brother; if you have offended your brother, go to your brother." The common ingredient is you, humbling your heart and going. Why? Because our purpose is to be the introduction of Spirit into situations that do not have Him. We're supposed to be a testimony of what the world hasn't seen yet. We can't wait for justice to go. We're to be the just for the unjust. This is not about us being saved only [Boy, do we gotta' be saved.] ... but it's us being saviors as a result of being saved. I mean the going forward testimony of the next age is not that the saved will come up upon Mt. Zion, but that saviors will come up upon Mt. Zion.

There's been some level of response to being slapped in the face as a "move" because we have not been evangelistic, and we've kind of "squid-oiled" out of that issue by saying, "Well, my calling isn't to be evangelistic." Even if that's true, it really isn't the point. The point is that our calling to be evangelistic is by the full testimony of God's purpose having been established by being proven in us. The manifestation of that evangelism isn't going to be one of the five-fold ministries of Ephesians 4. It is not going to be by going to the far stretches of the nations. It says that "nations, the remnant of the nations, will come to Zion to be taught of the God of Jacob." Why doesn't it say "Israel?" Is that curious to anyone beside me? It doesn't say "to be taught of the God of Israel" because if it said that, "they would come to be taught of the God of Israel," they would say, "Well, he had an advantage that we didn't have." But they are "taught of the God of Jacob." Oh, this is good stuff. The original change – they will know that we have been framed out of that which had been born in sin and shapen in iniquity. It will give them great hope to hear that message – that we too can be affected by the influence of this same God. Wow! What a declaration of evangelism that's going to be – "able to save to the uttermost," not just get them born again. That's really the evangelism we are called to.

You know Jesus didn't get manifested and enter into His ministry when he was 27. We have to go through the process of being established so that our testimony is like what we are. God took Moses out of the midst of Israel and Egypt to establish him so that when he went to Pharaoh and said, "Let my people go," there was a substance in him that gave what he said authority. He had to work to bring a humility out of the one who grabbed his sword and killed an Egyptian out of some arrogance and presumption that he could fulfill what God had called him to because he knew what God had called him to. Knowledge is never going to be the solution; it actually defines the problem.

Where was Joseph's trouble? Where did the word of the Lord start to try Joseph? In his dreams. God instigated the trouble. Apparently, the sharing of his first dream with his brothers didn't get him into enough trouble with his brothers for them to throw him into the pit, but the second one did. Apparently, he didn't recognize the set of his brothers' jaws and the glint in their eyes when he told the first one. So, he was pretty clueless, too.

I want to think about Paul for a couple of minutes. Paul's encounter with Jesus Christ was on the road to Damascus; it's well documented. What he said was, "Who are you, Lord?" Eye saw....he hadn't entered in yet. Obviously in his heart, he hadn't heard yet; but he recognized – He's greater than I am, and I don't know who He is. His testimony later was "When it pleased God...." Boy, what does that mean? How long does that take? What did you say? Fifty years? Give or take – the difference between the Hebrew and the Aramaic calendars....there's a fudge factor there. "When it please God to reveal His Son in me." What a transition. As he went into Damascus, he knew his name – Jesus. As he came out of Arabia, he knew His location - "in me." He began to proclaim that to the apostles. They had a meeting and they took turns saying essentially this, "Don't you think that if Jesus wanted us to know that, he would have told us?" The only real synergy, resonance, or relationship that they could establish from where they stood to what Paul was saying was two things. One, the witness of the Spirit that was underlably in them because they would not even have met after Paul had presented his gospel if there hadn't been something there, right? They would have said, "Get him out of here. He is wasting our time." There was enough of a witness that they said, "We need to talk about this." But James, the brother of Jesus, stood up and said, "You know, I've just got to say; we are at risk here of opposing God." – "Really? Why's that?" – "Well, because the manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit, that we know, have broken out where he preaches." It wasn't because they finally understand his gospel; it wasn't because the witness of the Spirit was enough to embrace his ministry. It was because they had identified those gifts as the evidence of the Holy Spirit being given on the basis of Jesus being effective in becoming their Savior.

Quite a long time later, after the fortnight that Paul spent with Peter – and you can see the influence of that discussion of fourteen days in Peter's writings, he said, "Those things that Paul talks about are very difficult to understand." We have been exposed to those things in a way that has made them common brand names in our households, you know? "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Coming to the reality of that – why was that written and what does that represent in the Spirit? – is kind of like Aaron riding in on the Day of Atonement through the ordinances of God behind the veil, successfully accomplishing atonement for the nation of Israel – extremely limited in its real spiritual import because he was entering into the type and shadow. The effect that it had was that for the next year God would forgive sins based on the shedding of the lamb's blood, definitely better than the world had it. It had a glory but a very limited expression of what God's intent was.

What God's trying to get us to do is to step out based on the confidence of His testimony in this natural world, the on-going expression of His purpose in your life and in my life, to engage His Spirit for the full measure of His purpose. So Paul in Damascus had a gospel that was framed by "I know the answer to who it is – it's Jesus." Then, he came out of Arabia and he said, "I know where he is now; he's in you and in me." Then, he went into Rome and his testimony was, "It wasn't really Jesus; it was God in him." Christ in you, but God in Christ." He did have a brief stop in Galatians, and that's where I want to go and kind of talk a little bit this morning, the book of Galatians.

What you and I are doing by being here and what we are here as an expression of is the fact that God has begun to overturn natural law in our lives. We are also here to say that natural law hasn't been completely subdued yet because we still feel the influences of that. When Jesus was in full dependency and established in the expression of the full maturity of the weakness that is Christ, he walked completely free of the influence of natural law. That's why when he walked on water, he didn't sink. There was a cartoon of a woman with a halo around her head and a little baby in a bath tub. The words under it said, "I said, 'Get <u>in</u> the water!" He didn't have that ability because he was born. He had the opportunity to walk on water because of what he allowed God to do in him, of overcoming the natural here, to be established by the eternal, and then manifest its dominance over the natural law around him. Jesus didn't consider it a miracle when he multiplied loaves and fishes. Everybody else said it was a miracle. He just thought it was "falling out of bed." If I drop this Bible, is anybody surprised that it falls to the podium? Jesus was not surprised when natural law was leveraged by somebody who was walking in subjection to that which was eternal. In fact, it says in one place concerning the miracle of multiplying loaves and fishes for 4000, "He, knowing in himself what he would do, asked them..." He wasn't surprised by the miracles. I'm looking for eternity to overcome what is temporal here, and I have to get God intimately involved in my life on a daily basis for that to happen. I can't be comforted by doctrine. I can't be framed by tradition.

Galatians 5:17 – I'm going to modify a few of the words here, not because I think they are better words, I just think they are for us because of our history with the words that are in the Bible. Sometimes those words repeated become "yada, yada, vada." Familiar. It's nice sometimes to read another translation, not because the translation is more accurate, but it gets us out of the rut. We go, "Wait a minute; what was that?" It's kind of like the first time I heard the words that were on the page, "And Jesus said to the multitude, 'You're not seeking me because you saw the miracle." I thought that's why they followed him. Well, they saw the loaves and fishes multiplied, and they saw 12 baskets picked up; but Jesus said, "That isn't the miracle. What you didn't see was a man subject to God has dominion over nature." That hasn't been seen before. In verse 17: For the flesh lusts against the Spirit – "For the natural is contrary to the spiritual." We don't want to take this because of the four-letter word l-u-s-t to where our minds usually go when we hear that word. "The aggressive interest and focus and desire of the natural is contrary to the interests and influence of the Spirit, and the Spirit against the natural. These are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things that God would have you do."

The Spirit against nature so that you cannot do what God would have you to do. God has established us in Christ to be a testimony of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. That's our job. Any other testimony in between is breaking ourselves off from the traction of His mighty hand before it is fulfilled pulling us to where He wants us to be. David framed exactly what our accountability to that mighty hand is, because Paul said, "That I might apprehend that which I am apprehended of," – turning around, not just relying upon His grasp on me but grasping Him, to co-labor, to be joined to His purpose for His reasons by His Spirit instead of just taking His gifting for us to be significant. I'm going to say this, and I can't stress it enough: gifting does not, neither will it ever make you better. It just makes you "gifted." But the church doesn't see it that way. The fact that they don't see it right gives rise to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans and to the activities of the Nicolaitans, both of which Jesus hates, by the way.

So, there's an adversarial relationship between natural and Spirit, but that's the reason that God was never done with Adam in six days. He finished creating him in six days, but He had a seventh day and His seventh day is Christ. Hebrews 4 says that we ought to enter into it, not just for what it has for us, but for what we can be joined to by joining that purpose – co-laboring.

You know the first three feasts are fulfilled in a sacrifice that Jesus made for you and me. It didn't cost me anything. The fourth feast, or the second group of feasts, is based on Him administering the Holy Spirit to finish the purpose for which Jesus died, and that didn't cost me anything either. So where's the test of discipleship? Is it in the first four feasts? No. Will I open my ear to the trumpets? Will I allow His purpose to be declared in my ear and established in my heart? The purpose of the Day of Trumpets or the Feast of Trumpets was to establish in Israel a call to repentance, to consider the past year since the Feasts of Booths the previous year, to take ownership of what they were and what they weren't and covenant before God to do better. But that was the law. We understand that the covenanting that we are making is not to do better, but that we are humbling ourselves so that He can work in us, so that we become better. This covenant isn't about "doing;" that covenant was about "doing." This covenant is about becoming by Him. It's the circumcision of the heart without my intervention but with my participation.

The penalty for messing up on the Day of Atonement, back then under that covenant, was that if you didn't afflict you soul, you were cut off from the people. I don't know if that meant execution or stoning. If it did, I don't know if it ever happened or if you could plead your cause. "NO, no! Really, I was afflicting my soul!" It was just the type and shadow, but if we don't accept the message, if we don't take ownership for what we are and what we aren't, where we are in this progressive working of the Spirit of God to bring us forth as a testimony of Him, how will we possibly be prepared to afflict our soul before God? Paul said it in Ephesians 5:29, "No man hath yet hated his own flesh." I've got to replace a word there, I'm going to replace "man." "No 'Adam' hath yet hated his own flesh." There is a man who does and his name is Christ. We've been brought into Christ to hate the temporality of our own existence, the limitation of our own capacities, to no longer be framed by the definition of the soul: the intellect, the emotions, and our own will. Boy, that will not fuel salvation to get home. No matter what it might have seemed to be participating in the process in the first four feasts, that is what the definition of the affliction of the soul is in the fulfillment of this feast – that we will hate....we will come to the place where we hate our own life.

Paul said in Philippians 3, "You know you are never going to label as 'dung' what you are still holding on to." He said, "I've suffered the loss....and counted it as dung." If it's still in your hand, you'll never call it "dung." It may be dung, but if it is important to you.... This is the testimony of the rich young ruler. Jesus said, "Go and sell all you have and come back after you have given the proceeds to the poor, and then you can be my disciple." What was he unwilling to do? Devalue what he had to the point that it would sell quickly. "I can't sell my house." "TIl buy it!" "Really? Oh good!" "I've got a dime." "You think I'm going to sell my house for a dime???" "Ok, so you said you couldn't sell your house, but what you mean is that you can't sell your house for what it is worth to you." The point is it is still way too important to you. No man has yet hated his own life. It takes Christ and the growth and development of Christ through the administration of the Spirit to bring us to the place where we see that the "Father is greater than I am." Why would I want to hold on? The things concerning me are destined and purposed to have an end. I'm going to the Father! Why would I want to be framed by limitation?

In the sixth chapter of Galatians, Paul continues to address this because he does not just point out a problem to not present a solution - the adversarial nature and contrast between natural and spiritual, adversarially aggressive against one another. He said, "Here's how you break the dead-lock – For he that sows to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." He doesn't say, "If you sow to the flesh you'll reap corruption," although that's true. What he said was, "If you sow to your flesh, you shall of the flesh reap corruption." That's all the flesh has to bring to the table. We could get graphic about that, but ...

We're looking to God to overturn nature, but if we're not subjected to Spirit. We believe in a more unbelievable rapture than the outer court church does. We would have to believe in pixie dust, that somehow God is going to take somebody that is really unconcerned and uninfluenced by the things of the Spirit and have that person inherit a glorified body at some point without that lack of focus first being addressed. Are you serious?

Sam said years ago, "The church is out there and they think that if they tag certain words on the end of their prayer that it obligates God to answer them – 'In Jesus Name." Where is it? How come he hasn't done it? It can't be God! Oh, no!! How

is that a prayer of faith if you are so soon overturned that God isn't answering your prayer because it didn't come in 13 seconds? How is that the "name" of Jesus who was willing to subject himself for 18 years to obscurity in spite of omnipotence beginning to rise up in Him, not only as a manifestation of capacity but of compassion? He grew up in Nazareth! Nazareth was the low-slope of Israel. Anything that was deficient began to slide towards Nazareth. Don't tell me he wasn't affected by compassion before he hit thirty. I know that his prayers before God were, "Can we not do something about this? God, I know Your heart; I know You're not happy with this." But that was a test for him to stay under. It was significant, in some sense, to prepare him to face Satan and look him down. Are you going to be subjected to God or aren't you? We want to do good before we are good. We are invaded really more with empathy than with compassion.

He that sows to his flesh. It isn't what you sow; it's what you sow <u>to</u> because we're the seed. If you sow yourself to the flesh, you will of the flesh reap corruption. But if the same seed, instead of being sown to the flesh, is sown to the Spirit, being the same seed, not being any different, just the same seed – if you sow to the Spirit, you will of the Spirit reap something that is a progressive step from where you are – one step further toward the purpose that God has for you. It isn't that the Spirit is limited, that He couldn't do it based on one sowing; He can. He really can, but the testimony of the church is to make evident to principalities and powers the full capacity of God's intent. God has to be justified in what He does. He has to be justified in what He does. Why? Because He is going to hold all of creation accountable. How can He be a just judge and hold you accountable if He has given special treatment for Suzie? It's not going to happen.

So the test of our faith is a daily test. If a testimony is established here and the commitment to the process is established here, in God's eyes He sees it as done. He says, "You're sanctified even if you are here." But for the sanctification to take residence so that it can be made known to principalities and powers who are going to accuse – "He's not done," we have to finish. God will call that which is not as if it already is, but Satan will accuse what isn't for its deficiency. So for a testimony to principalities and powers, we have to finish and appropriate. My sins were forgiven before I was born! My sins were forgiven before I did them! Otherwise, the last time I sinned, Jesus would have had to die again. But one sacrifice for all time for all sin. It wasn't until I was nineteen that I actually engaged the benefit of what was already accomplished. It's no different now. We have to actually receive, as an engrafted experience by the hand of God Himself, the full purpose of God before we are really a valid testimony and witness to that purpose. "That it should

be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." The earth is not going to be delivered from being restrained from the glorious liberty of the children of God, which we have experienced at this point – to what extent we'll take advantage of it is yet to be told, but its declaration would be that "He brings me forth to the light and I will see His righteousness."

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