

Jerry Wesol - Offering The Incense

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But, oh, good morning, brethren.

So the world is celebrating Easter Sunday, and we refer to it as Resurrection day, and you know, the world looks at this day as our Lord dying, hanging on the tree, accursed, and the sufferings that he did, and they account that as the ransom. But we know it for something much more. There's much more to it.

And what a blessing we have on this Easter Sunday. It marks the most momentous event of the world has ever seen. The empty tomb of the risen Son of God. Yet before there could be the glory of the open tomb, there must first be the incense of sacrifice ascending acceptably before the Heavenly Father. You know, in the atonement day sacrifice is outlined in Leviticus 16 in the type Aaron took the finely beaten incense and he placed it upon the fire before the Lord that the cloud might pass within the veil and cover the mercy seat that he die not.

And Jesus first rendered unto God the perfect offering of fragrance born of fire, suffering, surrender, devotion, and faithful obedience even unto death. In the antitype the atonement day sacrifice, Jesus is represented in the bullock and the church and the Lord's goat. The bullock is offered first, and Jesus as our antitypical high priest, was perfect. He didn't need an atonement for himself, but his body members did.

So our Lord made the offering on our behalf, and Aaron had to fulfill the service of the temple as the high priest for the atonement day sacrifice ceremony. He had to do it faithfully and obediently, and so too, if our Lord Jesus was not faithful to his consecration, there would be no atonement for mankind, no body members to follow in his sacrifice and the consecration unto death and the sacrificial life.

Accepting the cup of suffering, there would be no more opportunity, and Paul tells us in Hebrews 10, 19 and 20 that we now have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he's consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. It is in the connection that we by grace, through the merit of our Redeemer, are counted as his prospective body. The Church recognizing that we're called not only to behold his glory, but but to share in it. For not only did our Lord as head offer the sweet incense of his own perfect sacrifice, but in him we also are invited to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, and thus to become a sweet savor unto the Lord.

And today we're going to talk about this offering of the incense, and you know it really is the sin offering picture, and we are dwelling in the holy and partaking of that showbread, having the knowledge and having experience, enlightened by the golden candlestick, the lamp stands and working our way. It's progress. It's part of the experiences.

So that while the offering is made out in the court, the transformation is taking place. It's the sanctifying effect and that this altar, the brazen. I'm sorry, the incense altar represents, and one of the things is we are in the holy and partaking of all the, and having all these experiences, and the Lord is sanctifying us.

And we see that this placement where that incense altar is, is right up against the hill, and there's an interesting thought that brother Fry found. Oops, I'm sorry, Brother fry found in 1st Kings 6:22,

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and this is from the NLT, and it says, so he Solomon finished overlaying the entire temple with gold, including the altar that belonged to the Most Holy.

Now you see that, brethren, what it's saying, the incense altar is associated with the Most Holy, even though it's in the holy, it is the closest that one can get to the Most Holy while still in the flesh. It represents that intimate place of prayer and communion, standing at the threshold of glory itself. So we're getting this picture that there is progress that has to be made and bringing us to there in the various experiences, you know, and to just collaborate. This Exodus 30, verse 10 tells us that Aaron would make atonement on the horns with the blood of the sin offering. It is the most.

It is most holy unto the Lord. So there you see that connection, The golden altar. You know, let's take a look at its description here. It's incense altar. It says, you shall make an altar to burn incense of acacia wood, cubit in length, a cubit in breadth, square and two cubits in height.

Its horns shall be of one piece with it and overlay it with pure gold.

And I'm sorry, with pure gold and with a crown of gold roundabout. So there was a molding that was put around the top of it. Then you also had the same molding that was around the table of showbread, and on the mercy, not on the mercy seat, but on the Ark itself. There was a crowning, crown, molding as well.

And we think that this bespeaks that glory, honor and immortality, the crown of life that's promised, and so Brother Russell's thought is that the church is represented, Christ and the church are represented in this golden incense altar, and when you see the wood, it was made of a wood and then it was overlaid with gold. So we have the wood representing the humanity. But from the Lord's standpoint, it recognizes it as a new creature and is dealing with the new creature.

And the Lord sees this as.

He sees it as the new creature, a new creature in the flesh. With this earthen treasure, Once in a year, we're told that Aaron shall make atonement on its horns, and this annual atonement must be made with the blood of the atoning sin offering for the generations to come. It is most holy unto the Lord as we read before, and we know that before in Leviticus, the 16th chapter, verse 2, gives us the gravity of how important this process is.

In following the ceremony, Aaron would not come in at any time, otherwise he would die. The Lord was saying that when you come into my presence, come in with a sin offering, come with blood. The life given that represents the priest's access requires atonement. There's no shortcut to glory, and the blood requirement was absolute.

Without the death of the animal, there was no life given, so there could be no atonement, and so we see that the high priest, when he went in to the holy, he brought with him, I'm reading from Leviticus 16, 12 and 13, that he shall take a censer full of burning coals, the fire from the offering, the fire from off the altar, the brazen altar, before the Lord and his hands full of sweet incense, beaten small, and bring it into the veil, and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may overlay the mercy seat that is upon the testimony of that he die. Not so we see that it was the blood, the death of the animal. The full consecration unto death is represented here.

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And it was necessary to come into the Most Holy. But there was also the incense. If the incense was not sent up and covered the mercy seat, he would die, and notice that the priest, he brought the coals, the burning embers from the brazen altar into the holy with him, and you know, those coals, those burning fire represent the trials of life, the experiences you're having.

And it, and it indicates to us brother Fry's comments. He tells us that beginning about the Lord's being, about the Lord's business and his service, you will bring trouble with you. Fiery trials. So we see, without the incense cloud covering the mercy seat, he would die in God's presence. Entry to the Most Holy not possible unless incense covered the mercy seat.

And until God our Lord finished his Sacrifice faithfully, obediently, even unto death. Then he could go into the Most Holy in the presence of God and live.

Isaiah 53:11. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied, and by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities, and so we're seeing here that what a privilege that we have to be part of that sin, Offering, sacrifice and offering up these incense because of the merit of our heavenly, our dear Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus, and the blood is so important.

And we're told that in the blood is the life that maketh atonement. Leviticus 17:11, and we saw where the blood was, where the blood was placed. The blood was on the horns of the brazen altar, and it shows us that the natural life there is left.

And it's given up for the spirit begotten life, and then it's put on the horns of the altar and the incense altar, and it tells us that this spirit begotten life becomes a spirit born life eventually with the blood showing onto finally the mercy seat.

And it's because of the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus that we have the privilege to follow his example and be with him in glory as his body and bride, and fill up the afflictions of Christ, returning that blood she is using now, so that it can be then applied on behalf of the whole world, for the blessing of the world.

And we know that full satisfaction was made. That blood was sprinkled seven times in the form of a cross, and it depicts the full completion. It was sufficient in Hebrews 13, 11, 12. For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp.

Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the camp. Yeah.

And then 16, 9, Hebrews 6, 19 and 20 tells us which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. So the reward was promised, the reward was given. I'm sorry, having trouble here.

Jesus was our forerunner.

And even Jesus made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. He's gone before us and we follow in his steps. Our hope is anchored beyond the veil, and what does our walk look like, brethren? In response to this, what happens to us?

Paul says in Galatians 2:20, I am crucified with Christ.

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I but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God. Who loved me and gave himself for me. Paul's sacrifice sent up a rich perfume. Yet like ours, it was acceptable and will be acceptable to God, not on account of its own value, but because of being offered upon partaking of the merit of Christ.

Paul is helping us understand that as long as any of the members of the body are still here in the flesh, Christ is still being sacrificed. The antitypical sin offering is not finished and there is a greater ministry that needs to be done. Death to self is birth and glory. Paul didn't talk about sacrifice. In theory, he practiced it relentlessly.

And he calls every member of the body to do the same, and he says in Colossians 1:23,24, wherefore I, Paul, am made a minister, who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church, and that's what we're supposed to be doing. That's the only acceptable sacrifice that we lay down our lives for the brethren, and Paul says in First Corinthians 4:11, for we which live are always delivered up unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also in Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal bodies.

So we had discussions yesterday that we are not our own. We've been bought with a price. So we are a part of our Lord and part of his sacrifice. So as the Church, the Christ is still here sacrificing.

It's. There's still this opportunity and it still has to be fulfilled and accomplished, and Paul says, I die daily. It's the old man that must die to have that spirit birth, and our vow of sacrifices, we suffer for the body's sake, which is the church.

This is our ministry now, and Jesus said, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye love one another. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13. Such a beautiful picture.

And sacrifice, and you know, the world, they don't see this. They see this as an ugly thing and they don't understand it. But this plan that God had for the body, for a sin offering for the people, which goes so far beyond the ransom, it's a day by day continually consuming, and the Scripture makes it clear that it wasn't a plan invented along the way.

It was appointed, it was purposed, it was God's design from the beginning, and you know, as Jesus and for those that would follow him in sacrifice shall die like one of the princes, and after the order of melchizedek in Hebrews 13:13, Paul says, Let us therefore go forth unto him outside the camp bearing his reproach, and our desire is to. When Brother Obi had in his presentation yesterday, Philippians 3:10, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto death.

His death. When we walk through the world bearing that reproach, most people have no idea what they're looking at. They see us, but they don't see us. They can't, and the reason why, you know, when we take a look at this, those things in the holy were only meant for the priest.

And whenever the furnishings were traveling, we'll just talk about the incense altar. It was covered with a cloth of blue, and then it had the seal skin covering it. So as it traveled and it went through the camp, that's all the people saw was the seal skin. The people couldn't see the gold.

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They couldn't see the cloth of blue, only the seal skin, and when Jesus walked among them, they saw, but they didn't know who they were seeing. They rejected him, and even today, as we walk through this world, the world sees, but doesn't know what they're seeing. They can't see the gold, our covenant, our standing as new creatures.

They cannot see the blue, our faithfulness and loyalty. All they see is the sealskin, our fallen flesh, our weaknesses, our struggles. But, brethren, God sees differently. God sees the gold. He sees our covenant relationship with him.

Through Christ, God sees the blue, our faithfulness, our devotion, our consecration. God sees what we're becoming. Through Christ, the new creature being transformed into his image. We may look ordinary to the world, just another person struggling, but to God, we are his temple, his dwelling place, covered with gold, beautiful with the blue of heavenly loyalty. The world judges by outward appearances, but the Lord looks at the heart, the world sees flesh.

God sees the faith and treasure and the earthen vessel. So while the world sees only the outside, something beautiful is happening on the inside. Something that rises, something that ascends, something that reaches God himself, and it's not just the prayers of the saints, and as we looked at these different experiences, and we want to show now how they are, they affect the new creature and how our Lord Jesus was affected by them and what these different ingredients mean.

And this is where we really. The point we really wanted to get to, and we think it's a beautiful picture. So now in Leviticus 16th chapter, the atonement day, sacrifice, ceremony, ritual. We're told in the type that only the high priests offered the incense.

But you know, as in a general sense, Brother Russell suggests that all those who are covenanted to be of the high priest will offer their own incense, and we think that Revelation 8, 4 fits with the general premise of Romans 8:17, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so, be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together, and the scripture we have is Revelation 8:4, and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

And we think that this is a beautiful picture of showing that the incense with the prayers, you know, not just the prayers, and that's appropriate too. It does say we have in the Psalms 142, it tells us that. Or 141:2 tells us that the prayers ascended, you know, as incense to the Lord. But we also have this.

And when we're talking about the sufferings that are going on and as part of this sacrifice, and it had to be this way, Christ had to die. Christ. Christ's head and body in this ignominious kind of death, they drank the cup. Remember, Jesus said, shall I not drink this cup my Father's poured for me? This was a cup of sufferings.

This was the dregs of what had to happen.

And what exactly goes into this perfume, into this ingredients that show us what the experience is like, and remember, when the Lord outlined the tabernacle, he gave Moses specific direction, and he said, you make everything according to the pattern, the measurements, everything. All the things were for us to understand what his purposes were, and he gave a specific recipe for this incense.

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And there were four ingredients, and they're measured with precision. So let's take a look at this now. So in Exodus 30:34 is where we get the ingredients, and it says, and the Lord said to Moses, take unto these sweet spices, Stacte and Onica and Galbanum, these sweet spices with pure frankincense.

Of each shall there be like we each ingredient equal portions, and this is going to be important, and each ingredient represents a character quality that's essential to acceptance, to accomplish an acceptable sacrifice.

And when we look at the stackdi, the stacti is from the Hebrew na'taf, and na taf is it signifies like drops, and you know, this is this stacti comes from the myrrh tree, and myrrh means bitter, and so here you have this picture when the tree is cut and wounded, that drops like tears coming out, and it's very fragrant.

It's most likely that that the Stactae and its Latin equivalent refers to myrrh and drops her tears as we said, and it's suggested by Brother Russell that Stacte responds to the first ingredient of the sweet incense of faith. But this faith is not mere intellectual or mental ascent or belief in the existence of God, but rather that heart appreciation of God, whom it has found to be its comfort and solace, and all the bitter and trying experiences of life. Myrrh itself is bitter. In this connection it's necessary only to think upon those ancient worthies who obtained a good report through faith because they failed not to believe in and trust in God, despite the bitterness of their trials and their experiences.

Surely a faith that will manifest its trust.

Not help but inspire all who are called upon to witness it. Thus does its fragrance cling to the garments, permeate the very atmosphere through which it moves. How often have others breathed in the fragrance of our faith as it's emitted? It's some deep sorrow or trial of life when we, like Job of old, have declared, oh, he slayed me, yet will I trust him. Job 13:15.

Bitter trials produce sweet smelling faith. The faith that manifests trust in God under severe trial cannot help but inspire all witness who witness it. The crushing produces the fragrance. Others have breathed in the sweetness of our faith as it's emitted. It's some deep sorrow, only held firm, it wouldn't let go.

And you know it's that fire, not really the fire, but the heat from those coals that causes fragrance to arise, and no one demonstrated more of the stacked perfectly than our Lord himself. Hear how Hebrews describes and Paul describes his walk through the trial in Gethsemane, who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared strong crying with tears. Jesus exemplified stacty perfectly. Tears of faith in Gethsemane, his darkest hour.

His faith never wavered. When our faith is tested, when the myrrh is crushed and the tears fall, that's when the sweetest fragrance arises to God. That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1st Peter 1:7 and when we come to God, it's By faith. But faith that has been tried in the fire.

Have we said to a brother or a sister when they're in the dire straits and going through tough experience, remember, remember all these things work together for good. To them that love the

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Lord, you know, who are called according to God's purpose. But when it happens to you, and do you wonder, is God still working with you? Are you alone? Has he stopped caring?

You know, this is the spirit of a doubter, and doubt cannot arise with your prayers. He's promised that he will never leave us. Believe God, he doesn't lie, and if you can go through the hard experiences and not waver in faith, then you have the first ingredient, faith and of represented in stacked tears that trust and prayers that rise, and now the next ingredient, we're going to kind of take them out of order.

This next one, because we want to make a point, this next one we're going to talk about is galbanum, and galbanum is an aromatic gum resin, again from another tree. It's from the genus *Ferula* and it's been used for thousands of years in incense, medicine and perfumery because of its strong green, balsamic and slightly woody scent, and it's a gum resin, and you know, there's a couple of Bible historians say that the smell or the smoke from the Galbanum would drive away snakes.

And what is that would have driven away Satan with Eve in the garden? Obedience. So Galbanum represents obedience, and it's this obedience that the Lord is looking for.

And it also has wonderful healing properties as well. As we talked about serpent killing properties, when mixed with certain oils, the scent of the galbanum is often described as an intensely green, resinous, somewhat bitter, with nuances of pine, earth and cut grass.

But this is not obedience that is the easy kind.

This is the obedience by the things we suffer, and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto them that obey him. Hebrews 2, 10, 5, 8. It's the obedience of holding your peace when provoked, of not retaliating when wrongly accused, of saying nothing when saying something would feel so satisfying. A positive, deliberate, firm stand taken in obedience to the divine will will spare us much that is evil and injury.

The enemy cannot abide where true obedience burns. Obedience drives away all the serpents of Satan. It's the serpent repelling spice. Obedience is in the ingredient that drives away Satan. But it has to be consistent, not selective.

Let's make sure we don't water down this ingredient.

It is not always easy to hold One's place. Peace. I'm sorry to be quiet, to say nothing, not to retaliate, not to revile, when all manner of evil is spoken against you falsely, or when mean and unjust things are done unto us. But it is from the overcoming of just these things that the sweet incense of the life of prayer arises unto the Lord and merits for us abundant entrance into his presence.

Remember, partial obedience is disobedience. True obedience creates a spiritual atmosphere where the enemy cannot operate. Partial obedience is not obedience. We mentioned that galbanum was used for its healing properties, and so too are other ingredients. But we should remember that by you taking a stand and not wavering from the Lord's ordinances, you may be the very medicine that one of your brethren they see that will help them and something that they may be struggling with by your steadfastness, it will give them strength.

And may I add that assembling together like we are is so important for this very reason.

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Obedience is the ingredient that drives Satan away. Obedience at all times, or it's not obedience not just when convenient, I'm sorry, but at all times. Because otherwise it isn't obedience. The third ingredient is the only one in the entire recipe that comes from a living creature we're going to talk about next and that deals. That detail is not accidental.

It's pointing to something profound about the nature, and we think it represents love. Annika is mostly associated with the operculum. Now, the operculum explain that to you. In the base of a snail, it's like its foot.

So when it closes itself into the shell, there's a piece that comes up, and you can see on that picture on the left. So on the right you have the snail in the bottom, and this is the other. This is what's left after the animal dies.

And this is dried and it's beaten small into a powder.

And this was very plentiful in the sea snails of the Red Sea.

This is the only ingredient from a living creature. Just as God's attributes, love is shown by the image of a man, and this points to life given to sacrifice that comes from the living. Love is an abstract. It's personal, costly and real.

Now, this was the point that I wanted to make. It's the onika that caused the other ingredients to cling together. So you have these different ingredients and then rather than having this whole smoke go all over the place, the ionica had a property in it that would grab all of the other elements and they would swirl together to rise up over into the most holy. Isn't that a beautiful picture? Isn't it true that even in our fleshly lives, love is most desired of all emotions?

And when it's demonstrated and shown toward and given to others and it's a true love, doesn't that have the most satisfaction and the most impact? Love requires life, not just sentiment, and this love, Annika, love is not a love that works when everything is fine. It's the love that proves itself when everything is going wrong, when love is under fire. Annika represents that unfeigned love, Love tested under pressure, under an evil report.

Remember Stephen as they stoned him. He didn't curse them. He said, lord, lay this not to his charge, and he prayed for them. Luke 10:19, 20.

Jesus told the 70 that went out, you have power over serpents and scorpions, but don't rejoice primarily in that. Rejoice because your names are written in heaven. A greater proof of your spirit begotten condition than miraculous gifts is the spirit of love that never fails love. Chapter First Corinthians 13.

When you can love knowing that it's not returned, that is a sweet odor to the Lord. Mercy and forgiveness belongs to them. With a pure heart. These shall see God. Matthew 5, 8.

Love under fire, that's when it's real, and remember, brethren, on all of these ingredients, it's the heat, the fire from the coals, that activate the ingredients and causes the incense to rise. The trials to prove our loyalty to the Father. But we know that he has promised that we will not be given anything that we cannot handle. He wants to burn off the dross, chisel away at the roughness in our characters.

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He doesn't want to destroy us. He wants to refine us till he sees his image, and this is the way he is chosen. The incense cloud to cover the mercy seat that he die, not Leviticus 16, 12 and 13, and again we remember that the final test was Aaron's faithfulness in fulfilling the requirements of the sacrifice, obedient to the direction of God.

The telling would be that he would be permitted into the Most Holy and come forth alive. This gives meaning of men given once to die and then the judgment. We're not talking about ordinary men. This was the priesthood. The incense cloud was a matter of life and death.

If Jesus was not faithful in every way, there would be no ransom, no reconciliation, no body members without prayer, worship, faith, obedience and love and praise toward our Heavenly Father. We cannot live in his presence, and James tells us to count it all, joy to Suffer, and Paul tells us that suffering works. Patience, endurance and suffering is part of the cost to be counted, to follow Jesus.

When your faith is under pressure, can you be sweet? When your love is tested, can you be sweet and not try to vindicate yourself? Can you be obedient and not just when it's convenient, but at all times without prayer, without faith and obedience and love continually rising, we cannot thrive in God's presence. The cloud of our devotion must be perpetual. Our delight must go before us or we cannot take that last step.

And all it is is a step. The bowing under into the most holy and live cloud is the proof of faithfulness and the life proof of acceptable sacrifice. Sometimes God calls his servants into different kinds of fire. Not just the coals, but the furnace of tribulation, and he asks the hard question, will you trust me?

Even then.

The Father may call us to enter the fire of tribulation. Remember the three Hebrews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. When did the one like the Son of Man appear?

It was when the fire was seven times hotter and their clothes were not singed. No smell of smoke.

Their faith was so strong they weren't even burned. Our God can deliver us, they said, but even if he chooses not to, we will never worship any other gods. Learn to trust where you cannot trace Him. They were rewarded for their obedience and loyalty. Their faith was so strong.

Our God can deliver us. But even if he chooses not to, we will never worship any other gods. We recognize as members of his body in the flesh are all counted in as parts of his sacrifice because associated with him and under him who is our head, our chief priest, who that appreciates the invitation to membership in the Ecclesia, does not rejoice to suffer reproaches at the name of Christ and to lay down his life in the service of the truth. What matters it to these, if the world knows us not? What matters, earthly loss, if we may be counted worthy of sharing with our Redeemer in his future glories.

Can you be sweet, hot fire, strong faith, sweet fragrance. So we've covered three of the ingredients and now for the fourth, perhaps the most familiar to us and the one that crowns all the others. When faith and obedience and love are brought together and added to the final ingredient, we have the final rising.

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And this is the incense, the frankincense. Frankincense comes from the trees and the boswallogenis, small, hardy desert trees. Resin is obtained by cutting the bark so a milky SAP extrudes and it hardens into a resin like tears, and it's crushed. It has a woody, resinous and earthy scent. It's a subtle sweetness and citrus brightness, often described as uplifting and clarifying.

Spiritually, frankincense represents praise, and the three elements are combined and added to the frankincense. Faith, love and obedience combined with your praise. The four together of equal weight, and as the new creature mind grows and strives for the heavenly home, the life will reflect this.

The words spoken, the reserved behavior, kindness, endless demonstrations of love for the brethren. The world may not see it. How can they? They dwell outside the holy. But your brethren will see it.

The old adage, I'd rather see a sermon than hear one. Now you have all four ingredients, and together they make one great fragrant smoke that will allow the passage beyond the veil and live. You can't have a lot of faith and no obedience, or lots of praise and no faith or love. The ingredients call for equal weight, a perfect balance, no unrighteousness to be found in the bride, and here is the beauty.

The three elements before is a combined and added to the frankincense. Faith, love and obedience, all combine with your faith. All four together of equal weight. They cannot have true. You can't have true praise without the other three.

And the other three find their crown and praise. Praise is the crown. Faith, love and obedience. The jewels. Now, one solemn warning we're given from Scripture.

The recipe was holy. It was sacred. It was for God alone, and any attempt to imitate it for personal use brought severe consequences. God is not pleased with counterfeits.

And we're told in Exodus account it says, and as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof. It shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. Whoever shall make like unto that to smell, there too shall even be cut off from the people. Exodus 30, 37, 38. That was to be a guard against hypocrisy.

There is one standard only, the true. No imitations and no other way but through Jesus as the pattern. No strange fires before the Lord. There is no substitute for Christ likeness. God is not mocked.

If you have faith, let it be true and sincere your love, let it be true and sincere your obedience. Be obedient at all times, not just when it's convenient. God accepts no counterfeits, so be genuine, and if we find that our incense isn't pure as we'd like, if the trials are consuming us and the dross is thick, take heart to my time. Right at our time.

Sorry if the trials are consuming us and the dross is thick. Take heart. That is precisely the process God uses to bring forth the gold. Chastening is not joyous, but yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Hebrews 12:11.

Brother Russell had this in reprint 1944. He says, as gradually the dross of the gold nature is consumed of the old nature and the gold becomes more and more manifest, these precious souls become ever dearer to their loving Lord. So dear are they to him, that in every affliction he is near

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with his grace to sustain and his presence to cheer, and the deepest shades of sorrow become memories. Most hallowed resting places where the day star shines the brightest.

No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.

Under such discipline the soul is mellowed to a loving submission that calmly says, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. The gold emerges, the fire refines the gold, and the gold remains. The gold is being revealed, the incense is rising, and the day is coming, perhaps sooner than we think, when the sacrifice will be complete and the priesthood will stand in the Most Holy. But until that day, when one thing remains for us to do. Psalms 90:12 so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Let's maximize every opportunity. We're standing before the golden altar of the incense, the Church in the sacrificing condition, offering acceptable worship through the merit of Christ. We've examined these four ingredients of equal weight, God's perfect recipe. All four must be present, balanced, blended and beaten small, crushed by the trials of life so the fragrance can rise. We're offered up by our High Priest to the Most High.

The blood and the incense together are required. The High Priest needed both. May we be faithfully fulfill our covenant of sacrifice. Christ Jesus has returned and taken charge of the harvest, and we believe soon that all who name the name of Christ will go beyond the veil and the royal priesthood will stand complete in the Most Holy, ready to bless all the families of the earth.

But until that day, until we hear it's enough, let us burn the incense perpetually, keep our faith pure through the bitter trials and maintain obedience at all times. Perfect, perfect our love under pressure and offer our praise continually.

Let us wait, watch and pray and number our days. On this Easter Sunday, as we celebrate Christ's resurrection, let us also celebrate the promise of our own. If we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified with Him. Until that time, may the fragrance of our lives rise as sweet incense before him. May we all stand together one day soon.

Beyond the veil. In the presence of God. It's just one step to go beyond the veil. May the Lord add his blessing.