

Kent Humphreys - To The Rock

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Our. Our theme hymn points us in this direction that we should focus our lives. By the way, just before we started, I had a conversation with the Lord to ask his blessing on each and every one of you here today, and I know he hears, so I know he did. I just want to let you know that before we start today, the world lives in turmoil and fear.

And should we be surprised. I was so pleased with the talk that Brother Nathan gave. He went into great detail on what I was attempting to do yesterday. It was very good, and Brother Lynn rounded that out with things that we should do to correct ourselves and to prepare for those inevitable things.

Should we be surprised, brethren, at the things that are going on in this world today? No, for all of this has been foretold to us, every bit of it. We read in Matthew the 24th chapter, verse 6, and it he says, and you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See to it that you are not frightened, for those things must take place.

But this is not the end yet. So. So don't worry. There's still more wars, rumors coming up. There's an undercurrent of mistrust and suspicion in many corners of the world.

It used to be that if you came to an agreement with someone to say on a purpose or a purchase rather, you. You shook hands with them and the agreement was sealed. Today you almost need an army of lawyers to close the deal. Even when this hymn, the Rock, was written in 1871, times were tough. In 1865, the Civil War had just ended and the states were torn apart.

I would suspect that the brethren then thought, the end can't be far away. The sentiments of this hymn reflected the feelings of that day. After all, over 620,000 people had died in that war. That's staggering when you realize the population of the United states was only 30,800,000 more died in that war than all of the others combined. It was during this turmoil in 1879 that Brother Russell began publishing Zion's Watchtower.

People needed something solid in their lives in order to hang on. Religion was taught, but most of it in the churches was about the burning fire and the hell and all of that not conforming to those who had. Just. Just think, think of this, that all these people have just come out of the worst history and war of the United States, and these preachers are preaching about hellfire and damnation.

Really encouraging, but you know, the Lord moves in very strange and mysterious ways. It was a time for the truth to come into people's lives. As God told Job, he says, my ways are higher than your ways. From that time on, the truth began to cover the earth, brethren. Many religious hymns were written during those times.

Abide with me Tis eventide All for Jesus all the Way My Savior Leads Me are just some of the uplifting spiritual hymns during those times. You know, when you're down and we all get there from time to time, we need comfort and we need reassuring to strengthen our faith. Take the hymn Abide With Me. Tis even tide. What is the first thing that your mind goes to?

Well, it's Jesus, of course. Our heavenly Father has provided our Lord Jesus for our comfort.

He is our rock. He loves us, and he protects us from all harm. We brought up, brethren, about the hedge that Job was talking about, this hedge that was built around him. When Satan says, well, I

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can't harm him, you've got a hedge built around him. We have a hedge built around us.

And that hedge is Jesus Christ.

Abide with me Tis eventide and lone will be the night if I cannot commune with thee Nor find thee in my light the darkness of the world I fear would in my home abide, and we heard that beautiful song that touched us all when it was sung by Brother Stephen in Luke, chapter 6:46. There's a lesson about builders and foundations that really appealed to me as an old retired contractor, and these are the words of Jesus, and he says, and why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not what I say?

Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and acts not upon them, I will show you whom he is like. He is like a man building a house who's dug a deep foundation and laid it upon a rock, and when a flood came, the torrent burst against the house and could not shake it because it had been well built. But the one who had heard and acted not accordingly is like a man who has built his house upon the ground without any foundation, and the torrents burst against it, and immediately it collapsed.

And the ruin of that house was great.

We must put all of our trust and Jesus not in man or religious ideas. He is the rock of our salvation. Why do you trust Jesus? Why did Abraham trust God? Let's consider Hebrews 11:1 in this regard.

He says, now, faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. The statement almost seems contradictory. Let's examine it. Suppose you have a dear friend who is sick unto death, and the doctors have pronounced about a week for that person to live. You've tried everything, you know, everything to do in modern science is at an absolute loss to give you hope.

You're a religious person, but you have not yet presented the entire matter before the Lord. You pray. In John 11:25 we read these words. Jesus said words to her. He says, I am the resurrection and the life.

He who believes in me shall live even if he dies. Think about that.

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me shall live even if he dies. We're all going to die, brother. But we will live afterwards. As Jesus was standing next to Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, he said these words.

Did I not say to you, if you believe, you will see the glory of God? And Jesus raised his hands to God and gave thanks and said in a loud voice three words. Lazarus, come forth.

How much more, brethren? How much more will he act for those who God has called to be his family?

The world that we live in right now, it's. It's filled with fear and uncertainty, and truth is rarely spoken in personal as well as in business life, and Nathan brought this out very clearly. It's all a sham.

Every bit of it is a sham.

Humanity is drifting away from God. Materialism has replaced God. I want the bigger house. I want the best car. It's all about what they can get.

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You know, oftentimes I go through our hymn book and to remove myself from the cares and worries of this world. Safe in the arms of Jesus, safe from corroding care what a savior for the Son of God who came ruined sinners to reclaim. He's reclaimed us to the rock and what a friend we have in Jesus, and the list goes on and on. Try it sometime.

Sing these songs, God given songs to yourself. You will be amazed how it will transform you.

Trouble is, times are upon us, dear brethren. It behooves us to clean closer to faith into the rock of Jesus. In the past one of my favorite conventions to be was at Asilomar, California. As a matter of fact I was immersed there in 1968 with. With brother Steve.

We were both there together. I remember seeing Byron there. We were both black headed then. When the brethren would sing in the chapel with brother Tim leading, the sound of those hymns transcended everything. The point brethren, have we grown stronger in our faith since those experiences?

Sadly, some have drifted away from the truth. Or can we. Can we be like David when he faced Goliath? As we face the trials in our life, remember what David said. Can you imagine yourself going up against a 10 foot tall person with a sword that probably weighed 50 pounds?

He says, but I am coming against you in the name of the Lord who rules over all.

Today the human family has lost their way and it's not all their fault, as the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 6:12, and I've noticed this been prevalent all the way through this convention, and we want to quote it again because I want you to never forget these words that Paul said. He says, for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against powers. He's talking about the invisible powers of the fallen angels, brethren and Lucifer himself against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness.

And that's what they are. It's all behind the scenes so that you don't see them, and he comes in many cases as an angel of light against spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places they run our governments, believe it or not. So what does all this mean? People not being able to give the meaning of a woman, transgeneration, trying to change from one sex to another.

Calling people by pronouns, not their names, they, them, and it. I mean, ridiculous. It's going. The list goes on and on.

Now I'll ask you another question. Was this prevalent 10 years ago? Not to my knowledge. These things didn't exist. That's why I mentioned yesterday that these things are rapidly coming upon the human family.

That's why I want you to be prepared and acknowledge them. Governments making insane decisions which put the masses in harm's way. Does it speak to the possibility that we're getting closer to the end of the age? I believe so. When Peter said, think it not strange when you experience these fiery trials.

In the research for this talk, I found over 128 citations in Strong's concordance referencing rock, and for the most part, this is interesting. For the most part, directly and indirectly, they refer to Jesus. In many instances, God or Lord, capital L is interchangeable with the word Jesus. For example, In Deuteronomy, chapter 32, chapter 32 we find the quotation from the song of Moses in verse one.

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Give O ear, O heavens, and let me speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Let my teachings drop as rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass, and the showers on the herb. For I proclaim the name of the Lord, ascribed greatness to our God, the rock. His work is perfect, for all of his ways are just.

That's our elder brother.

We have to remember that all power in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus. All power in him. He's over all the angelic beings. He's over all this whole earth. He's only waiting for God to give the signal to pull it down.

We have to remain steadfast in our faith to him, our rock, and not get mixed up in worldly things, get swept away, you know. We've long drawn examples from the nation of Israel and their ancient history to guide us as we try to avoid the mistakes and sins that she committed, unfortunately, and again, the apostle Paul gives us insight into the mistakes they made and teaches us how to avoid them. We'll look to First Corinthians, chapter 10. Instead of paraphrasing, we'll we'll quote this directly, starting with verse one.

He says, for I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and passed the sea, and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, he says with most of them God was not well pleased. He didn't say all of them, he just said most of them. For they were laid low in the wilderness. He says, now these things happened as examples for us that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved and don't be idolaters, as some of them were, as it's written.

And you can be an idolater of anything in life, brethren, not a stone statue, but of anything you can worship money and cars and carpet or whatever. If you get it in the wrong perspective, it's is worshipping an idol.

The people sat down to eat and drink and stood up to play. Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did when 23,000 fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble as some of them did.

Grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happen to them, he says again as an example, and they were written for our instruction upon the ends of the ages have come. That's right. Now we're at it, brethren.

We're just waiting for the Heavenly Father to give the signal. Of course, we realize that the church has to be complete before he will do that.

What is it that the Lord wants from all of us?

What does he want for us for all he has given? Does he want you to be able to quote verse by the page? Does he want you to speak elegant, flattering words? Maybe this is not what he wants, what he is looking for at all. Maybe that's not it.

What if you make your calling and election sure? Won't he give you unlimited abilities? The one thing that you must change, the one thing you must change is your heart.

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The heart change must come from you, for you are a free will agent. We must be obedient to his word, as the prophet Samuel says in 1st Samuel 15:22, and we heard these very words quoted this weekend, and Samuel says, has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrificing as in obeying the voice of the Lord. Behold, he says, it is better to obey than sacrifice and to heed than that of the fat of rams.

That's if you know if you obey, you are not only fulfilling the law, you are fulfilling his direct will.

In the book of James, we get more instructions along these lines. Chapter one, starting with verse 21, we quote, he says, James says, therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness and humility, receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, not merely hearers to delude themselves. You know, you can have all this fantastic knowledge in your head and you, you can somebody ask. Oh yeah, that's it.

First Chronicles 23:5. You know, quote that out. If you don't act on it, brother, it doesn't mean anything. Really, it doesn't mean anything. You have to use that to help other people, to encourage other people, to console other people.

Let's jump down to verse 26. If anyone thinks himself to be religious and doesn't bridle his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. That's what. It would be worthless to you to have all this intellectual knowledge and not put it to use what God expects of you. You know, we're being watched every day by the Lord.

He's watching us right now. Right now. He meters your development with absolute precision on a human scale. If you owned a company, would you want to watch the daily progress of your employees? I know this is a simple analogy, but the principle is the same.

If you are faithful, you will receive the gift, the greatest gift imaginable. You will judge the human family and angelic beings. You will have no end of your existence. I. I can see this picture in heaven.

We'll use Joanne as an example, and the Lord says, Joanna, I want you to go down to Paraguay. There's some trouble there. I need you help straighten those brethren out can't you see that? That's how he will use the church, you know.

But there's a catch to obtaining this gift. There's a catch to it. You will have every trial, every discouragement, every health problem. You will have family problems as they try to show you a better way. Friends will leave you thinking you are strange in this belief that you have.

But you know you're not alone. You have the greatest invisible power standing with you all along this narrow way, and one of his many names is the rock. In Hebrews 13:5 we read these words. These are so consoling to me.

He says, I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you, ever, and further on in the same chapter, the apostle Paul makes these strengthening words, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.

He is the rock of our salvation. We are hidden in him. In the third stanza of him 355 hiding in thee we read these words. How often in the conflict, when pressed by the foe, I have fled to my refuge and breathed out my woe. How often when trials like sea billows row, I have hidden in the O rock of my soul.

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Comforting brethren, we have so many examples in the Scriptures that encourages you know, they were just as weeks old as you and I, and yet they overcame.

They overcame. Some were outrageously righteous, and there were some that were acknowledged to almost be perfect. Now, some of you may be familiar with these verses, some of you may not.

Some of these were so perfect in the way they lived that God spoke to Ezekiel and told him what he thought about these three men.

And as God is speaking to Ezekiel, he says, son of man, if a country sins against me by committing unfaithfulness, and I stretch out my hand against it, destroy its supply of bread from it, both man and beast. Even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves, declare the Lord. Well, now we know it was impossible because they were born before Jesus. But this is what our Heavenly Father said of these three men. That's how much he loved them.

Noah, Daniel and Job. Now, I don't know about you, but I don't think that I could have put up with a harassment that Noah must have endured while building that ark. Look at that old man over there. Look, he's building that strange looking little boat.

Could we be as faithful as Daniel when he faced the most powerful man on earth at that time and didn't flinch, didn't flinch, still went up to his room and prayed three times a Day. How about Job? He's one of my favorite characters. You know, the parts of the life of Job represent those of the saints. Here was Job, a man who suffered more than any man in history that I know of.

And even said, as for me, he says, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will take his stand on the earth. You know, brethren, that's the first place in Scripture the word Redeemer is used, and it was used by Job. I think they knew a little bit more than we give them credit for knowing. What did these three men have in common?

Faith or without faith is impossible to please God. Hebrews 11:6, and God said that they were righteous. Has he ever said that about any other human being? He did about Jesus.

But those three were special.

And why am I mentioning these three men?

These men believed God and believed he could. Our Heavenly Father did not direct every activity of their lives. They lived by their faith. Brethren, they didn't have some of the advantages that we have today, and we have stacks and realms of books and helps and guidance and direction from other brethren all over the world.

And we can compare notes and say, well, this is what God must have meant. Or Jesus said that they didn't have that. They had this faith in their heart. The ones who are called to be the little flock, they live their lives closely monitored to help shape their characters so they may be acceptable to the Heavenly Father. The earlier fathers were not living a life of complete consecration to do the will of God and His Son.

The only thing that they excelled in was obedience. This example is given to us. Yes, they some fail from time to time, like we do. Their experiences were written in Scripture to guide us, to soften our hearts, to be more obedient and more loving. To comprehend God is impossible even to

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understand.

Jesus would be impossible if it were not for the fact that he walked this earth as a man, even as a perfect man. He taught us. He taught us how to pray, how to apply righteousness. He even covers us with his own righteousness so we can approach our Heavenly Father. There's a very interesting article in reprint number 428 titled on what are you building?

There are some very salient points in this article and we quote Some build outright doing as a basis of hope that God will grant them eternal life. These build not on the rock, you're listening Christ Jesus, but built upon their own works. Of this class were the Jews who sought to justify themselves. But Paul assures us that they had not a good foundation. For by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Romans 3:20 others built their hope on salvation on the love of God. They feel sure that because God is very pitiful and full of mercy, therefore he ultimately eternally will save everyone from death. Such seem to forget that God has the same love for mankind for the past 6,000 years, yet he has permitted mankind to go down lower and lower into misery and death. We suggest to these, if God had so long kept love subservient to justice, this I found very interesting and never overruled his original sentence of death. Their hope rests on a sandy foundation, for his word declares with him there is no bearableness when he gives his word.

That's it.

With him there is no bearableness, neither that of turning. He will by no means clear the guilty. James 1:17 and Exodus 34, 7. Such are not Christians brethren, because they build hope and faith on the love of God and not on the only foundation, Christ Jesus. The love of God provided the foundation, but the love of God is not the foundation of Christian hope.

Unquote. The article is pointing out that the sacrifice was made by God in providing the only foundation whereby man can be saved. Christ Jesus the Rock. The entire Bible shows the involvement of Christ from Genesis to revelation and Genesis 3:22 says, Behold, the man has become like one of us. To Revelations 22:20 he who testifies to these things says, yes, I am coming quickly.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with us all. Amen. To the greatest name in all of heaven and earth.

Next our Heavenly Father is Christ Jesus the righteous. Amen.