

## Wilbur Poe - Restitution

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Our dear brother Poe has been, as Brother Siperle sometimes says, in the way for almost 60, 70 years. But he has been in the way, the right way.

We look forward to a rich blessing, and that hymn we just sung might give us some idea of Brother Poe's topic. But I'll tell you anyway. His topic is restitution.

Thank you, Brother Durand.

It is indeed a pleasure to be with you this morning, to be with old time friends again.

And I bring to you the love and greetings of our little class at Cincinnati. About 15 of us down there, but we're trying to hold up the light of truth as we have opportunity, and just before we left, the Kimmlers called up some of you know Brother Kimler. He is a big fellow who was named by his father, Judge Rutherford Kimmler, but he never uses that name in full. Today, however, they wanted to be remembered spatially to those that know them here.

Traditionally, as we grow older, we live in the earlier days of our life, and I had a great uncle who was up in his 90s, used to stand by the piano while my sister played for him and sing hymns of his own composition, and every one of them pertained to the days of his youth. They pertain to the old swimming hole, the sandlot, the first day in school, and those who had long gone. So today, dear brethren, as you know from the topic that I am living in the days of my Christian youth.

So I'm going to talk to you about the topic that first enthused me most, and every one of you will remember how zestfully we sang this grand old hymn, a thousand Years of Earth's Coming Glory, and I have never ceased to appreciate that wonderful hymn.

In fact, restitution is the main topic of the Scriptures, for it is spoken of by God, by the mouth of all his holy prophets. Since the world began, the high calling began to be spoken of by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by those that heard him. According to the apostle Paul, as important as the church is in God's plan, we are not belittling that at all, because that is our hope. But we want to remember that the church, in fact, there's a great salvage corps that our heavenly Father is preparing for the rescue of the world, of mankind. Now suppose the Coast Guard were to get a notice, a call that a ship is sinking at sea.

They would respond at the risk of their lives. But suppose that same Coast Guard should get the idea that we are the principal thing. Therefore all those on board ship are expendable. We must save our lives. But, my dear friends, those who have joined this great Coast Guard, as it were, have dedicated their lives.

This service is one of sacrifice, and you know how it is in worldly affairs. When one loses his life, he gets mentioned as a hero, and forever after, the speakers on the fourth of July particularly will talk about the noblemen who laid down their lives. We are not downgrading this great objective at all.

We know that they will be saying, this one was born in Zion, and that was born and done. But overall, the great objective is that of saving the human family, and how strange it would be if the Coast Guard should take a different viewpoint. Now, let's remember, brethren, how the Church got off on its initial campaign. Very shortly after the Lord and the apostles passed away.

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Those who professed to be the saviors of the world, this great antitypical Coast Guard, as it were, got the idea that they were the principal thing, and everyone who got in their way got in trouble. They impeded the work that was going on. Instead of being the blessers, they sought the blessings for themselves, and for centuries, as you know, there was warfare between the bishops and the civil leaders.

Every bishop seemed to want to be head, and finally, he dominated.

And it is to that that our historians refer when they talk about the Dark Ages, as being demonstrated over and over. Today you take the conditions in Ireland and over in Lebanon and so forth. It's clearly seen that they indeed have lost their great objective for which they profess to stand.

That's spirit, the spirit of sacrifice, was somewhat lost even in the Reformation period. Those who broke away from the Mother Church, according to historians, became little popes in their own area, and we can sympathize with them because of the fact nobody ever jumped out of midnight darkness into noonday light. They had to make developments. They had to learn, as you and I had to learn when we came into the truth.

Brother Essel recognized that that spirit had not died in his day. He made a statement one time. Some of you may remember it. I can't tell you where to find it, but the statement was to the fact that few of the Pilgrims would get into the kingdom, and I, as a young man just getting into the truth movement was almost bowled over.

I reasoned that if these men who were spending their lives as the Pilgrims, were in those days, riding railway trains from one part of the country to the other around the clock over the months, if they didn't all get in the kingdom, just one chance have I that, my brethren. When Brother Russell passed away, his judgment was Confirmed. You all know. If you do not know personally, you know from reading what happened after his death.

Ambition, striving, pride took over, and what we have today, some have called 57 varieties, have resulted from what happened after Brother Hussell passed away. So, friends, we're glad that there are some who have not partaken of that spirit. Some who are day by day seeking to walk in the footsteps of our pastor as he walked in the footsteps of the Lord, to proclaim that grand truth that a great salvage corps is in course of being prepared, almost completed, we believe, and that when prepared, then the grand work of blessing the world will begin. The mediatorial phase of the work will take over, and those who have laid down their lives will get everlasting mention from the world, as well as the honor and glory which the Heavenly Father has provided for them.

Now, in connection with this thought, we go to Ezekiel 9, which seems to be a thumbnail sketch of the work done during the harvest period. I'm sure you're all familiar with that chapter because it indeed covers many of the points of the things that have happened since our pastor passed away. To the man with the ink horn, he said, go through the city, through Christendom, and put a mark upon the foreheads of those who sigh and cry because of the abominations they saw and see in Christendom, says, go through the midst of the city, and after he had done that, in a later verse in the chapter, he says, I have done that which thou hast commanded, and I personally believe that he did, that he was faithful as well as wise, and that he did place on the foreheads of those who were crying and sighing because of what they saw in that time.

Now I'm sure all of you have learned that the only prospect it may receive the truth is that person who recognizes there's something wrong. In fact, the first step of becoming a Christian is the

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recognition of the fact that one is a sinner, and therefore, when one comes into the truth and leaves a denominational institution or comes from outside of a dominational institution, he must first recognize that there are some abominable things going on, and they have made him sick at heart, and therefore he is ready to be comforted with the truth. That is the kind of person that you and I can and wish to reach.

In these days, testing always follows the induction of one into an institution. We remember that, Brother Russell, when a newcomer went to Bethel to work, that he first gave him some menial task to see just what he would do, how he stood up under him and a very faithful and loyal brother told me that he went there one time and Brother Russell gave him a paste bucket and a brush and some posters and sent him out in North Pittsburgh on the north side to put these posters up, and he said he felt at heart that this is beneath his dignity. He didn't come to the Bible House to become a bill poster, but he said he carried through and I believe the brother proved faithful. Now, Brother Russell based his conduct on the scriptural admonition, and I'm sure you will agree that the church has not at all times lived upon to the recommendations provided.

In 1 Timothy 3:10 we read, Let the deacons first prove them be proved, then let them use the office. Being found blameless, they must be found blameless before they were elevated. They must be tested.

Previous words in that chapter show that it also applies to elders that they too must be tested. The harvest is a testing time.

Many of you have been around the farm district and have seen the up to date threshing machine in operation and the whole beating that the wheat takes. But of course it was very different in the Lord's time. They used oxen and other animals to tread down to walk over the grain, and after they trampled out the grain then they threw it up in the air, trash and everything, and let the wind do the separating. So all these winds of doctrine, my dear friends, have indeed done some separating over the years, and we opine that it is not as yet finished because the last member is not beyond the veil as yet. In my personal judgment, remember how in Matthew 24 and 24 the Lord said that would be false Christs false anointed, and that the conduct would be such that even the elect would be lost if it were possible.

He called the very elect in the King James, but it suggests the great beating that the wheat must take. See, this beating is not for the tares, it's for the wheat. It's to separate the wheat from the chaff, from the trash, from the air. As for Brother Elsa's death, you all know, either from experience or from reading the reprints in other literature, that Bethel was soon defiled after our pastor had finished his work and had reported as he had been commanded then to the others. The six that followed after him were also to go through the city, and they changed times and laws just as the earlier institution had done, and they tampered with practically everything and anyone that got in their way was in trouble.

And that has not been completed as yet. We believe as they were crowned losers in the papal development. So there must have been crown losers. When our pastor passed away, you were making a parallel between the first, the early harvest and the later one.

The perplexities that existed at that time were so great that you could really feel them, and we believe that they must have been somewhat comparable to the experiences of the apostles when they were disappointed. The disappointment scattered the early church. The disappointment when Brother Russell passed away scattered the church, and that scattering has continued even unto

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this day.

The Lord desires only such as worship him in spirit and in truth, and only such as do this may expect to continue to have the Spirit to lead them. You remember the first church was warned, the early church, that if they did not return to their first love, that the candlestick would be taken from him, and that rule, we believe, still stands and may still happen to one who violates the principle. Now, we think the guideline probably should guide us in this is found in Mark 4, 11, 12.

And that, you remember, consisted of the Lord preaching to the world. Those the majority of whom probably came out for the loaves and fishes in parables and dark sayings. You know, there are other reasons why people can come to a church organization other than to really worship and respect the Lord and to build up the brethren, and after the group had been dismissed, the disciples came to the Lord and said, why do you speak to these people in such cryptic language? Why don't you speak to them plainly?

And his reply said, there was it is given to you to know all the mysteries of the kingdom of God. But to these, these outsiders, I speak in parables lest they understand, lest they be converted, lest they have their sins washed away. Now, dear friends, you see, he was not worrying about those who could not see his work, and his objective was toward those who could see, those who were responsible to the Lord because of their. Their association with Him.

So we must remember that in connection with our activities, we are not to be so terribly disappointed if someone who is very dear to us can't see the truth. Let us remember that it is the Lord that gives us seeing eyes and hearing ears, and we cannot put ears on someone, however much we might love that individual.

So we are convinced that the Lord is testing, and the tests that have been going on since our pastor passed away are final tests. They don't all happen in a day, but they will soon, we believe, come to an end. Now, when our Master returned, you all know what he found from reading the scriptures and history. Isaiah 28, 6, 11 Tell us what he found that the tables were all filled with filthiness and vomit.

And the leaders, those who were waiting on these tables were drunken. They were intoxicated with false doctrine, and the condition was such that he could no longer use them. Therefore he turned to a people with stammering lips and another tongue, and from there on we recognize what had happened.

He used Brother Russell and he used collaborators as Brother Russell, and there's those who are still collaborating in this grand work of preparing for the blessing of the world.

The shaking followed our pastor's death, and I remember, no doubt you have read it in one of the earlier convention reports where Brother Jones witnessed a parade out on the Pacific coast. It was a church parade consisting of many denominations, and they were singing what we have in our hymnbook, Hymn G. They were singing like a mighty army marches the church of God.

We are not divided. One body, we one hope, doctrine and charity. That brought a smile to our lips when we read that in earlier days. But, my dear friends, it has changed things somewhat in our thinking as years have passed by because it has become a sobering thought to us. For we see the same thing has taken place in that grand association which we so loved and were laying down our lives far back in those early days.

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So this spectacle is one to bring sadness rather than joy. It is one to bring reality to our lives rather than a superficial view of what has taken place since our pastor left. I have jotted down a few things here that all of us, I believe, are conscious of today. Things that are known by the brethren everywhere as item number one. I repeat what I previously said and that a minority of the brethren is standing firm for that glorious doctrine of restitution which is to be a blessing to the whole world of mankind.

That doctrine which we so loved in the beginning and so loudly sang at our meetings, which brought us so much great joy, so much joy. Some see them things themselves today as recipients of the prophecies that pertain to Israel. They no longer look to those prophecies as applying to the Jews, but think of themselves being the beneficiaries of those texts, and the crowd, the group who hold that viewpoint is very large in our time.

Some hold the reign and restitution cannot begin until the second sprinkling of the blood. 4. Some claim the last members of the blood, the last member rather of the bride has already gone home and the great company class is indeed replenishing its oil. Number five. Others tell us that they're expecting the Lord soon.

They don't even see the many evidences of the Lord's dealing with the world, the nations and the church, and so forth. Some claim Keturah wasn't a type of the Third or Restitution Covenant. Number seven takes in the large professed group of Christians throughout the world, the denominations who seem to be on a last spree, flooding the world with their falsehoods. Some of you, I have learned, have been reading some of these books. One book in particular, we are told from the public press, has been distributed so widely that 10 millions of them have been distributed among the people since 1969. Recently I happened into a home where a number of these books were, and I had an opportunity of going through one of these books and I found that the author deals with practically every text in revolution, the revelation that you and I deal with.

And of course he had the future viewpoint. He points out that the man of sin is soon to be revealed, and that after that then the Lord will come. By referring to the footnotes in the Doughey version of the Catholic Bible, you will recognize that they too placed the man of sin down sometime in the future, not in the past, where you and I have learned that it is applied with this long preface. Let's see what the Bible says about restitution.

Like my time is going to run out before I get started on the subject. However, we would fashion overs that Jesus promised to return.

He was going away, receive the kingdom, and he would return, and receive them unto himself, and there are some who deny that it will be a personal return. In fact, the one that seemingly has fulfilled the scripture in Matthew 24 relative to the harvest time in the tower a number of years ago said the Lord would not would never return personally, but he would just turn his face toward the earth, and we have found some in the last few years still hold that viewpoint. In Acts 3:20 21 we read, Jehovah shall send Jesus Christ, whom the heavens must receive or retain until the times of restitution, of all things spoken of in the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.

It is noticed that this is offered in the sense of a corollary, a deduction drawn from a demonstrated proposition, namely, the Lord's return was dependent upon the coming of the times of restitution. The Lord couldn't come until restitution was due. To illustrate it, one might write a friend, and he may say, I will visit you when the ice is off of the highway. That statement would prove that he would not visit his friend until the highway was clear of ice. So we say that the Lord's return is just

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that positive in this proposition he could not return until restitution was due.

And we all remember how joyfully our pastor referred to the work, evidence of restitution already going on.

Our next point is Luke 19:15. It came to pass that when he received the kingdom, he returned and called before him his servants and asked to report on what they'd been doing during his absence, and we believe that that is in the past.

Remember that The Apostle Peter, Second Epistle, Chapter 3, Verse 3, says, in the last days scoffers shall come demanding proof of the Lord's presence. Peter, you'll notice, says, this is first he give priority to this, and if we can identify scoffers demanding proof that the Lord is present, this also becomes an evidence that restitution has begun. In exhibit see our third point, Daniel 2:43, 44 whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay Church and state in Europe in the days of these Kings prior to 1914 shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall consume all these kingdoms. Reprint 58, 54 column 1 at the top leases rendering reeds grindeth.

Now if the grinding up consists of destruction of nations, that grinding has been going on for some time. Look at the list of the colonies. When I first heard the truth, the great nations in Europe had colonies all over the world, and it was said that the sun never set on the British Empire. But look at it today. What has happened?

The colonies are gone and Britain is really striving to avoid destruction herself because of conditions they have become so galling to them.

The first step in the restitution of the ghetto, shall we say, is when the bulldozers come to remove the rubble, not when the fine new buildings appear after the work is largely done. Some of our brethren seem to be thinking of restitution in that sense. They're looking for the brand new building. They're looking for people coming forth from the tomb. They don't realize that the bulldozers have been tearing down those institutions and that when they're torn down, then the new building will begin to make its appearance.

And we come to Exhibit D Isaiah 52:7 9, which describes the activities of the Lord's people while the feet members are here, not after they have gone beyond the vale. They sing upon the mountains while the mountains are still here. Not many of them are left today upon which to sing. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings. It saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth the ninth verse of that chapter.

It reads, the Lord hath comforted his people. He has redeemed Jerusalem. Which seems to identify those to whom this singing is to be done. This apparently has reference to Isaiah 42, with which you're all familiar. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.

Say unto her her warfare is accomplished, and so forth. That was the message our pastor gave to the Jews in 1910. You have all thrilled by reading the message which Brother Russell gave them at that.

As thy watchmen shall lift up their voices together, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

In the early days I used to read that as though he was bringing again the nominal church or nominal Zion. But this Zion, according to the previous verses of that chapter, suggest that this Zion

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are those who had lived in Egypt, and we believe it's literal Egypt and not this symbolic Egypt. God doesn't purpose to bring again nominal Zion. The Feet members today know Israel is back in Palestine.

They see eye to eye on that. I'm sure there's not one in this room does not agree that Israel has since 1878, come back into Palestine and that they have a government of their own over there, and we remember that Matthew 24 says that when the fig tree begins to blossom, begins to show life, that the generation then living would not pass till all these things be fulfilled, and then we turn to the 90th Psalm where we read that one generation is 70 years. Then we get on our pencil and paper and begin to figure 1878 to 1948, just seven years.

And here we see eye to eye on the fact that they're back there, never to be removed again. In the history of mankind.

We see so many evidences of restitution. The bringing of Israel back to the Promised Land is restitution, pure and simple. You make nothing else of it. To bring one back in fulfillment of the promises made to these people so long ago is indeed one of our chief evidences that restitution is going on, has been going on since 1878, and that we're still looking for fulfillment of certain prophecies, and remember that our pastor said that prophecies rarely are understood much in advance of fulfillment.

And since there's some things that are not quite finished yet, we may not be too dogmatic about that. But let us stand firm on those things that history so firmly attests. May the Lord grant His blessing.

Thank you, Brother Poe, especially I for one, and I think the convention will go along with this. We're happy that 60 to 70 years have not changed your view one iota on the fundamental basics of the truth.

It is thrilling to hear restitution brought forth in its proper life at its proper time. To close, we will use the first and third and fifth verses of hymn number 24, which will be a melodic corroboration of Brother Poe's discourse. First, third and fifth hymn number 24, Salvation Ransom Sinners.

Brother Poe will close with a prayer, and we'll be back again at 11 o'clock to hear Brother Alexander.

Almighty God, our gracious heavenly Father, we would again lift our hearts to Thee, and we would again ask Thy blessing upon this convention, and we would thank Thee for this first section and for the glorious message that restitution not only already underway, but will soon, we believe, begin to become visible to those who have blind eyes. So we would particularly thank Thee that we are those to whom the mysteries in the kingdom are given, and we're not perturbed when we realize that others are in blindness.

And so provided by our Heavenly Father until this great blessing body shall have been completed, and in that grand work which thou hast designed so long ago, that of blessing the world and mankind, of restoring them to the profession of our Father in Eden. So with that thought, dear Heavenly Father, we can sing over and over and again and again this glad message of coming restitution for all mankind. So we would thank thee for that, and I would also like, in closing this petition, dear Heavenly Father, to ask that blessing upon the coming service of our dear Brother.

After the intermission.