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UNSHAKABLE THINGS

A sermon delivered at the
CHURCH OF THE OPEN DOOR
Sixth and Hope Streets
Los Angeles, California
by
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Pastor
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UNSHAKABLE THINGS

HEBREWS 12:27

"And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

It has been laid upon my heart to talk to you about some unshakable things that stand in the midst of all the confusion and changing scenes of this present day. I think there is no other word that describes conditions everywhere in this present day like the word "shaken." Everything has been shaken to its very foundations; this is true no matter where we turn, or what realm we may enter.

It is true of the financial world. I have people in my congregation who, a few years ago, computed their wealth in six figures, and today have no fortune and have barely the necessities of life. In these financial crises which are about us everywhere, more than one individual has come to feel that the only way out of his dilemma is the unhappy way of self-destruction. The financial world has been shaken, and the end is not yet.

A survey of the political world will reveal the same conditions. Nothing is more unstable than present day governments. Since 1914 the map of Europe has changed many times, and dynasties that were founded hundreds of years ago have passed away; while in
more recent years the Communists, the Fascists, and the Nazis have been shaking their fists in the face of stability, and threatening the integrity of the nations. Likewise, in the religious world many are at a loss to know what to believe in regard to the great doctrines of our faith. Few of the great verities for which multitudes have fought and bled, are considered worth contending for. The world of religion is a place of confusion, and similar to the financial and political worlds, is like a ship at sea without a rudder.

My friends, these conditions in the world present an unparalleled opportunity to you who know God to hold forth the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it would be a tragedy for you to go out of this life to stand before God without having used your time and talents in an honest effort to point men and women to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Christian people need not be perturbed, no matter what the future may hold. There are some things that are unshakable—as unwavering today as they ever were, and I want, as an ambassador of the King of kings and the Lord of lords, to urge you to link your life with these verities so that you may be as the rock of Gibraltar—unmoved in your faith and a shining light to others.

I. The Throne of God.

The first of these unshakable things upon which I wish to dwell is the throne of God. In Hebrews 1:8 we read, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." We have seen other thrones topple and fall. We have seen throne after throne fall in the shaking process of the last twenty-five years, and some of them have been founded for hundreds of years. Those that remain are becoming more and more insecure, and in regard to them, we do not know what a day may bring forth. But there is a throne that is as unshaken as ever, and that throne is the throne of God. No matter what may take place in this world, or in the starry universe above, the throne of God in the center of the universe stands forever and cannot be shaken.

Whatever his capabilities or lack of abilities may be, the man who acknowledges that throne and yields allegiance to it, will, even in this day, be as Mt. Zion which cannot be moved. The man who refuses to reckon with that throne, however learned and polished his life may be, will be a spiritual bankrupt today and part of the chaos of the Christ-rejecting world.

My friends, that is the trouble with our nation and with the world today. We have turned away from God. All of our national problems and our local problems are the inevitable result of our departure from the government of the living God. For I submit to you that when men depart from the realization that they are under the personal control of the living God and that they must give a personal account for every word and every deed to Him, they naturally gravitate to the law of the jungle which says, "Do as you please, satisfy the desires of the flesh without regard for anybody. Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." That is the philosophy of life when God is forgotten, and behind the fact of a forgotten God
there stands the explanation of crime and kindred ills that are sweeping our nation today. Forty or more years ago, there began the gradual introduction into our universities and colleges and pulpits of our land the teaching that man was under no divine compulsion whatever, that man was only a law unto himself, segregated upon this planet without God and without hope. This teaching, like leaven, prepared the minds of the growing generation for the reception of socialism and communism until most of the denominations today have become thoroughly permeated with this destructive teaching. Nearly all of our universities have founded their courses upon the hypothesis that man has descended from the lower forms of life and this generation has been taught to believe that there is no personal God, that all morality of the past was but a form of slavery. Moreover, we actually put into effect the philosophy of Carl Marx and Immanuel Kant, the result of this philosophy being confusion and distrust on every hand, outbreaksing sin and infidelity. Brethren, we need to get back to God or we will perish. This world is covered with the ashes of nations that have repudiated God. America will be no exception. The present crisis is a call to men to turn their faces toward God. Other crises within our nation in the years gone by have brought people to their knees and caused the people of God to cry out for divine help, but today we seem to think that we are going to squirm out of the present dilemma and find a solution in ourselves for the present problem. But the solution of this problem is not in men; it is in God alone.

A preacher told recently in the Church of the Open Door of a man who was riding along the road one day in a Ford, when something went wrong and the car would go no farther. He got out and looked at the engine, but could not find the trouble. He stood on the side of the road and stopped the first car that came by. It happened to be a Lincoln. The man in the car said, "Well, what is the trouble?" "I cannot get this Ford to move," he replied. The man removed his gloves, took off his coat and made a few moves beneath the hood and said, "Now start the car." And sure enough, the Ford was functioning again. The man had started back to his Lincoln, when the gentleman in the Ford said, "Pardon me, but what is your name?" "My name," said the man, "is Henry Ford." In this crisis hour we need the creator of the world. We need Christ, we need God. The only hope of America is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In fact, we must choose between Christ and chaos.

II. The Word of God.

The second unshakable thing is the Word of God. We read in Psalm 119:89, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." There was never a time when the Word of God was attacked so fiercely as today; yet there was never a time when people had more reason to believe the Bible to be the Word of God than they have now. Think of its fulfilled prophecies—prophecies concerning Christ, prophecies concerning the Jewish nation, prophecies concerning the Gentile nations. Think of its marvelous unity. Think
of the power of the Bible to lift men from sin to fellowship with God. Water cannot rise any higher than its source, and the Book that can lift men up to God must come from God.

If you should see me across the street from this building, looking toward this great building, do not think I am admiring the architecture, although the architecture is indeed something to admire. I love to look at those words cut into the stone outside of the building: “For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in Heaven.” In this day, when people have more reason to believe the Bible to be the Word of God than ever before, if a man says to me that he does not believe the Bible to be the Word of God, I immediately class that man as an ignoramus. The Bible is the world’s greatest seller. Think of its indestructibility. All down through the ages men have been attempting to destroy the Word of God, to destroy the Bible; but the Bible cannot be destroyed, because it came from God and therefore, like God, is eternal. “For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.”

The most scientifically correct book that this world has ever seen is the Bible. Science will never be able to disprove the divine order of the creation as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis.

One day a little girl went home from school and asked her father, “Daddy, is the moon made of green cheese?” The father answered, “Why do you ask that question, my child?” Her answer was, “My teacher said that the moon was made of green cheese.” Then the father suggested that she study in her Bible to see whether or not she could find information concern-

ing this question. Agreeing to his suggestion, the little girl went upstairs, only to return after five or six minutes, whistling a tune. Her father said, “I thought you were going to search the Word of God to find out whether or not the moon is made of green cheese.” Her answer was, “I have studied my Bible and I have found what I wanted.” When her father asked her how she found the information, she said, “I applied the scientific method. I read the first chapter of Genesis; the moon was made on the fourth day and cows on the sixth. Since you cannot make cheese without cows, I knew that the moon was not made of green cheese.” The scientific order is perfect.

I wish to urge you to build your life upon the Word of the living God. Life is like a building. It must have a foundation if it is going to stand. Jesus Christ visualized this great truth in the parable of the two builders:

“Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it” (Matthew 7:24-27).
If you should look at these two houses, you would not be able to see the difference in them. The difference was in the foundations—something that was out of sight. And, too, if you look at two men, one a Christian and the other a person who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ, you would not be able to see a great difference in them. Both have two feet, two arms, two hands, etc. But there is something in the man who knows the Lord Jesus Christ that the other does not have; and when the storm comes and the wind begins to blow, the Christian is able to say, “Peace, blessed peace!”

III. The Church of God.

The third unshakable thing I wish to mention is the church of God. My authority for this statement fell from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ: “Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

You will remember that our Lord made this statement after questioning His disciples as to who the people in that day considered Him to be:

“And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:14-18).

The Lord Jesus built His church according to this statement, on the great central fact of Christianity, which is His deity. That is where the church stands: not on the example of Christ, nor on Christ as a good Man, or a great Teacher, but on Christ as the eternal Son of the living God. And because of that everlasting foundation, the church is secure for time and for eternity.

Every local church worthy of the name “church” has that foundation. Christian Science is not a church; neither is Unitarianism. Liberal “churches” that deny the deity of Christ are not churches either. They are simply clubs. The one and only church, the church which Christ is building, is made up of men and women who confess Christ as the eternal Son of God and are washed in His precious blood. That is the church against which “the gates of hell shall not prevail.” It stands forever.

Christ’s church is called “his body,” to illustrate the mystical union betwixt Christ, the Head, and His people.

The older I grow, the less interested I am in denominational differences. One day I boarded a street car and sat beside a man who was reading his Bible. We began to talk and the man said, “To which church do you belong?” I answered by asking, “What is your church affiliation?” He replied, “I am a Methodist, I was born a Methodist and I will die a Methodist.”
When he repeated his question, "What is your church?" my answer was, "I belong to the church which is His Body." The man looked puzzled as he said, "That is a new one. I never heard of it before. When was it organized?" My reply was, "It was organized 2,000 years ago." When he asked, "Where are its headquarters?" and I answered, "In heaven," the poor man thought I had taken leave of my senses. But, my friends, that is the only church, and when the Lord returns and the church is raptured, the only one that He will recognize will be "the church, which is his body," made up of all men and women who have been truly regenerated.

IV. The Child of God.

The last unshakable thing that I wish to discuss is the child of God. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17). That was D. L. Moody's favorite text, and, should you visit his room in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, you would see this wonderful statement from God's Word upon the wall. It was Mr. Moody's motto, and he endeavored in life to put the will of God for him into execution. If you, by the grace of God, determine to do the same thing, you will abide forever.

You ask, "What is the will of God for me?" The will of God begins with believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. The Lord said to certain ones, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life" (John 6:40).

After you have come to know Christ as your Saviour, then you may speak to Him in regard to the sphere of your service. It may be that God will have you go to Africa, or India, or China, or to some other needy field. The will of God is not only the holiest place but also the happiest place in which to dwell.

One of the greatest men that God ever raised up in recent years to preach the gospel was Dr. Walter B. Hinson, the late pastor of the Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, of Portland, Oregon. It is said that following a consultation with a specialist, at which time he had been informed that he was the victim of an incurable disease, and had only a few months to live, Dr. Hinson walked out into the garden of his home, which he loved. Looking at the mountains reaching their majestic heads heavenward, and gazing in the direction of the mighty Columbia River, watching the sun as it slipped behind the everlasting hills, he said, "When the mountains have forever ceased to be exalted in towering strength above the cities of the earth; when the river has run its last mile; and when seas have passed forever from this universe; when the sun has risen and set in all its beauty and glory for the last time; yea; when the moon and the stars have forever ceased to give their light; when the mighty trees of the forest have shed their last leaves, and all nature has departed to its final rest, I SHALL LIVE ON, yes, I SHALL LIVE ON."

We have also read of the great sadness that came into the heart of a noted English pastor who had shepherded his flock for forty consecutive years. With deep emotion and with quivering lip, the pastor had
resigned his pastorate mid the shedding of many tears in his congregation. The next day the sexton was standing under the gallery in the great auditorium, when he saw the pastor come out and step behind his much loved pulpit. For a moment he stood there in profound agitation, and then with a trembling but confident voice, he said, "I must sever my connections with this church." Then, looking to heaven and thinking of his eternal union with Christ, with upraised hand, he added:

"But this I do know,
We two are so joined,
He can't be in heaven,
And leave me behind."

Brethren, these are dark days, possibly the darkest we have known for many a year. Let us, as pastor and people, lay hold as never before with a firm grip of unwavering faith upon these unshakable things, and spend our lives in making them known with all of their meaning to a poor, lost, dying world.

A few days ago, I received word of the death of one of my best friends, and one of the greatest soul winners of the last generation, the Reverend Charles F. Hummel. Mr. Hummel was in the Moody Bible Institute with me from 1911 to 1913. Upon being graduated from that institution, he went to Africa to work among a primitive people, many of whom had never heard the name of Christ. For twenty-seven years he had the privilege of telling the marvelous story of redeeming grace. God signally blessed him, and at a recent communion service, hundreds and hundreds of men and women, redeemed from heathen darkness, gathered to remember the Lord in His death and His coming again.

Mr. Hummel burned himself out for Christ whom he loved so dearly, for he died at the age of fifty-two. Several days ago he underwent an operation in the Johns Hopkins Hospital. On Sunday, October 19, he slipped away from us and went into the presence of the King. My friends, that man will live on and on and on, for he lived here on earth to do the will of God, and "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

I urge all of you young people here this morning to sever yourselves from the things that perish with the using, and to link your lives with the things that are eternal. If you do not know Christ, accept Him into your heart this morning. Link your life with God in blessed service for the making of His glorious salvation known. May God lead you to do this today.