Read your Bible. Go to church. And be good…and don't be bad. Then I'll like you if you do that. (being funny) This is the most incredible thing. There's a message for every Christian that's ever breathed on this earth. That is, He said one thing to Adam, “Eat.” And you know, He's never said any more than that. He has never said more than that. When He got here on earth, incarnated, He said, "Eat and drink,” and He showed forth again His purpose. That we, all that we have and all that we are, are partaking as drink and as food of the Lord Jesus Christ. He once more showed us His eternal purpose.

God put him (Adam) in front of the Tree of Life. That great vine tree, with water pouring forth from it. The Lord said, "Eat that tree." And that tree was Christ. If he had taken the fruit of that tree, it'd have been a different story, wouldn't it? But you know, I don't think that surprised God one bit. He was determined that Adam would be an “Arminian”; that he would have free will inside that which is unbreakable sovereignty.

If you weren't here Friday night, then you don't understand what I'm saying. Adam made a choice, and that's all right with God. Sure, it was the wrong choice, but at least it gave him a “in comparison to.” You and I are not like Adam; we have two things to compare. Adam did not. He had seen the Lord face to face. You and I have two things we can do: reject Him or take Him, and we know the difference; Adam didn't. Adam and Eve in a garden. A paradisiacal garden.

Now, I'm going to tell you something. When you think of that garden ever again, try to think of it as a lumber yard. I bet that's not the term you use here in Scotland, is it? You have lumber yards? What do you call them? Timber yards. And yet they sell sinks there, don't they? And water heaters? Alright, think of it as a DYI store. We have them in the United States called Home Depot. The thing's gigantic; it's bigger than an airplane hangar. You could go in there and get all the lumber you need to build a home in one trip. Everything. You wouldn't need to go anywhere else to build it. Think of the garden as a lumber yard.

It's a garden, and it's got water, trees, fruit, gold, pearls, precious stones, man, woman, and God, and many other things that tell us about Christ, like light. Then came the fall, and God closed off the garden. Now, brothers and sisters, we can't find that garden today. So, I am going to assume that He lifted it off this earth, this fallen earth.

I want to take a real swift trip through the Old Testament. Something is growing in the heavens, and it is being pictured to us here on earth, but we are now in a fallen state. The sun is duller than it was. The moon is not as bright. The planets have all distorted and twisted and fallen, and I don't know if you have this in your country, but in my country you can drive along the road and see the strata in the earth. You can actually find it sitting up like this, straight up and down, and the strata go this way. Some great, horrible contortion that lifted it like that. We're always trying to prove Noah's flood. I don't think most of this stuff had anything to do with Noah's flood. I think it had to do with the fall. Oceans rose, continents disappeared. This old planet groaned and cried and quaked, and still does, waiting for the day it gets replaced by a new earth.

So we begin seeing some small altars. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all had an altar, and then we see this spectacular vision of Jacob when he says that God has a house on earth, and he saw a ladder. That ladder joined two realms, earth and heaven, and there will come a Man who will join earth and heaven. He said, "At the foot of that ladder," He said, "this is where God dwells."

Then one day, cutting this short, God spoke to Moses and said, "Look up there." And Moses saw something bigger than Abraham's little altar. He saw something. We're not really sure what it was, but whatever it was, the Lord said, "Now, make a replica of that which you see up there here on this earth." Moses said, "Look, Lord, we're out here in the desert. I can't possibly make anything like that." The Lord said, "Do the best you can." So they got scraps together and built a tabernacle. That's where all the gold went. They got some badger skins - I can't imagine from where - and they had silver, and you know the story of the outer court and the inner court and the holy of holies and the ark.

You've heard some great messages on the tabernacle. Most of you have. I hope you have. You know how it goes. We come up to God's building, and the first thing we see is an altar, and we have to go to the cross. Then we go into the laver; it's made out of mirrors, and we get a good look at ourselves, and we have to see what we look like. Then we go into the holy place, and then finally we get to the ark. Phooey. That is not how God's people were built.

When they walked through that wilderness and decided that, at that point, they were going to re-erect that tabernacle, they put down the ark first. And they measured everything from the ark. The building began with the ark and moved outward. You've got to give me Christ before you'll ever give me an altar. I will not go to an altar without having encountered Him. You start with Christ.

Well, something's happening. Something's happening at that lumber yard. That DIY, that Home Depot, because David looked up into the skies and saw the building that Solomon built. It got bigger, and now it's a temple where God dwells. Then Ezekiel saw a temple bigger than the one Solomon saw, and he saw it in a vision, and oh my goodness. There was a river flowing out of the temple - a river of water to quench the thirst of God's people. He saw it in a vision.

Then came a man, a God-man, and John declared that he was the tabernacle. Then he declares Him a temple, and so does Paul. But something then changes in the message: as this building is built, we have become part of it. We are built together into the temple of God. Brothers and sisters, I would like to use a different word than church, but I have to remind you that those passages by Peter and Paul that spoke of a building were written to the ecclesia, not to you as individuals. Those people saw the ark, and out of that ark grew the building. Out of that ark grew the building, and I say it to you again: it is a revelation of your Lord alone that can bring back, or bring to earth, the ecclesia.

Now let me do this again. What's in the garden? A tree. A river. Gold, pearl, precious stone, a man, and a woman. And God. We begin with "In the beginning, God said, 'Let there be light.'" Genesis

1 and 2 are outside the fall. By the way, I really recommend you read this beautiful book by an incredibly gifted author: The Divine Romance.

God put him to sleep and broke open his side, and out poured what? Tell me, what came out of his side? Water and blood. Blood for redemption, water for life. There's something else that also came out of that side - a girl came out of that side. Out of this side of God, and she has His DNA. Would He marry less than his own species? One day we're going to see that lady.

Now we come to the other two chapters that are outside the fall. *And I saw the bride, the wife of God, descending out of heaven, the New Jerusalem.* And she's blinding. She's made of stones so precious because they were crushed. She is showing forth light, and when that light strikes those stones, you and I cannot imagine the awesome, supernal glory. She is expressing her Lord. She bears His image, and at her center is the throne from which all rule flows.

She is made out of real stones; she's made of real gold, and she's made out of real pearl. Did you ever read the writings of one of your greatest sons, C.S. Lewis? Did you ever read The Silver Chair? Do you remember that some lived under the earth? And down there were diamonds that were alive. Do you remember that? Wasn't that something? Well, these stones are alive, and from the throne, just as Ezekiel had seen it in a vision, from the throne of the Lord pours forth living water, crystal pure and clear.

The garden has changed. The same elements are there, but God is finished building. And what's there? Gold and pearl and precious stone and a tree of life with a river in the middle, and the tree on both sides. What kind of a tree you figure that is, sister? It's got to be a vine tree. And we are there. That city has no death in it, and it doesn't need a light bulb. It doesn't need a Lamp, for the Lord and the Lamb are the light of the city. That's *real* light. And the tree is there. God is there. And the water is there. The gold is there, and the stones are there. It's not a garden anymore - it's grown up to be a city, 1,500 square miles.

Do you know what else is there? It's the whole thing. The New Jerusalem is the final ultimate expression of the church. That's where the church is going, but right now, she's supposed to be on this earth, bearing His image and showing forth His sovereignty. A place you can walk into and be a living stone built up with other stones. And finally, in the last day, this whole universe goes away. There's a new earth and a new heaven, and a city—the New Jerusalem—which has always been His house, the place where God dwells. There is no temple there. It's square, just like the Holy of Holies. In fact, *that* is the Holy of Holies.

For a moment, she's a bride. Do you know what a bride is? A bride is someone who's married but is still a virgin. Do you know what a wife is? A wife is someone who's married but no longer a virgin - she has become one with her husband. *And I turned to see, and I saw the bride of Christ, the wife of the Lord. And I saw New Jerusalem.* May God by His Holy Spirit show you the New Jerusalem. He dwells there. He dwells in the church.

There's a man there, just like there was in the garden. And that man is Christ. There's a woman there, and that woman is you and me, made up of all those parts we talked about - the chips of Christ. They have all come together. This is His eternal purpose.

Brothers and sisters, our business is Christ and the church…and the church in Jesus Christ. I will lay down my life for that city. She is so much the message of God: here she's coming down out of the other realm. She is partly of that divine spiritual realm we talked about Friday night. Here she comes. There's the new earth, and there's the new heaven, and where is the New Jerusalem? Right where she ought to be: between heaven and earth. She joins the two, because she is partly divine and partly of the earth.

That's also what your Lord is: partly of the heavens and partly of the earth. She pictures His eternal purpose that God and man be joined and become one. Everything points to that - His eternal purpose. Brothers and sisters, it's always been His desire to have a wife, that He can marry and become one with, and she has always been the church. In her final expression, she is the New Jerusalem. She is a "she." And brothers, I've got news for you - one of these days…you're going to be a girl.

Then we read 1 Corinthians 15, and in that passage, we can understand that God is the All, and Jesus Christ becomes one with His bride; they become one person; and then Jesus Christ turns to the Father and submits Himself, His bride, and the whole new creation before the Father. Somehow it appears that the Lord Himself goes back to where He came from, and she goes with Him, and she has, according to John 17, the same glory that the Son has. The Son shares the glory of the Father, and the bride becomes one with the Son, and together the Son and the bride, who are one, turn back to God and disappear into Him that He might no longer be All…but All in All.

Great heavenly days; why sit you here? This is His eternal purpose, and I leave you to the Holy Spirit. In a book I wrote, I said, "The only purpose worth living for and the only purpose worth dying for is a hopeless cause." Then I said, "And this is a hopeless cause." To bring back that expression, where God can be sovereign, and His throne reigns, and where people can walk in and say…and this was Paul's test of a church, that the heathen can come in, and the new Christian can come in, look around and say, "God is here." That means you see Him in the gathering.

She's never been large, but man, she's always been glorious. Why would I want to be anywhere else but there? Brothers, this is a hopeless cause, but it's the only cause worth dying for. The only one worth living for. To see again on this earth that beautiful, beautiful woman expressing her Lord here. The church, as she ought to be, is a colony out of heaven. Where men and women can come from the east and the west, the north and south, and see Him in her, and know what the kingdom of God will be in the last hours of that which we can understand. What's going to happen beyond that hour, I do not know. All I can tell you is that in that closing scene, we see His eternal purpose, totally outside the fall.

Now I leave you to the Holy Spirit. Next Sunday, not tomorrow, next Sunday, I really hope you find great and marvelous grace in the Church of Scotland. As you sit there in that pew that's 300 years old, I hope that while you're sitting there, you remember there's something a lot better than that. And that's His eternal purpose. I leave you to the Holy Spirit, and may that Spirit who dwells in you speak to you of the heart of God.

Well, Lord Jesus, we thank You for that incredible picture. Now give us the sight of Christ, the revelation of You. And Lord, put us in the dead center of Your eternal purpose. Don't forget us in this generation. Bring us to our habitat, where everything in us cries out, "Home."