

# The things that can and cannot be shaken (Quality good)

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Preacher: Rowell, Peter

- [ 0 : 00 ] With the help of God this evening, we shall consider together words you'll find in the chapter that we read, the twelfth chapter in the epistle to the Hebrews, verse 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.
- And there are two phrases in this verse which will form the basis of my comments this evening.
- First of all, those things that are shaken as of things that are made. And secondly, those things which cannot be shaken.
- Paul is evidently speaking in this chapter of those two kind of things. Things that can be shaken and things that cannot be shaken.
- [ 1 : 20 ] And before I come to the words of the text, I shall make one or two introductory comments about the history of this church and the history in which the history of this church has been immersed over these past hundred years and more.
- It was in May 1800 that a new curate was expected to preach in Rowling Paris Church.
- Many of you know how that man, George Bars, began his ministry with a most remarkable text.
- I have a message from God unto thee. Now at that time, it is said that the view from Rowling Hill was like a view of Dante's Inferno.
- I don't doubt that that is the truth with the mills and smoke and grime of this area. What was worse was that the moral and spiritual state of the people was indescribable.
- [ 2 : 41 ] It has been said you could hardly call the area civilized. The ministry of that man had a most remarkable effect.
- The influence of gospel truth was brought to bear upon the hearts and minds of men and women and it spread. And I believe that that commenced a remarkable change in the attitudes of the people far and wide around this area.
- As you travel around this area, you will see many, many chapels like this and many of them were a direct result of the ministry of this particular man.
- He unwisely attacked the belief that many had in the baptism of believers as over against the sprinkling of infants.
- No one seems to know why he should have been so forceful in his attack on that particular point of belief, but he was.
- [ 4 : 00 ] And as a result of that, Daniel Matthews, for one, became very concerned. And he, with others, began to search the scriptures to find out whether their minister was preaching the truth.

The more they read, the more they became convinced that here, on this point, the dear man was wrong. Now, it was apparently in 1828 that Daniel Matthews first began his public ministry regularly in Rowley.

At least, that seems to be the date from which church history, this church history, begins. Now, that is a history of 147 years of a gospel testimony, of a Baptist gospel testimony in this part of the black country.

When you realize that around that time, around that period of time, for instance, in medicine, anesthetics were only just beginning to be used.

Antiseptics had just been discovered. Men like Darwin were beginning to pour out their writings, like *The Origin of Species*, which began to undermine people's convictions regarding the truth of scripture.

[ 5 : 29 ] When you realize that it was the very year when this chapel was open, that the first internal combustion engine was developed in Germany, you will realize the tremendous changes that have taken place over this last hundred years.

Now, it was in this background of remarkable developments in men's understanding and learning and men's knowledge of science and so on, that the ministry of Daniel Matthews and others like him was conducted.

And today, we look back with thankfulness. We remember what Paul says at the beginning of this chapter, we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

Well now, turning from those general remarks to the words of this text, there are things which are shaken. Just a brief word about the particular things that Paul is speaking of in this chapter.

He is speaking to believing converted Jews. Jews who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jews who had been gathered together as Christian believers into Christian churches.

[ 7 : 03 ] He says that there are some things which have been shaken and some things which have been removed. Now, if you see an old man walking along the road, and every step he takes is a shaky, tottery step, you know very well it's not long before that man will fall into the grave.

If you see a building with its walls all leaning outward, bricks falling out of the walls and the roof caving in, you know it's not long before that building will collapse.

These are things that are shaken. Now, the long history of God's dealing with the Jewish people, as a particular nation, as his own chosen people, was drawing to its conclusion.

And, as the Lord Jesus Christ came, and in his life and ministry, in his death and resurrection, he set before us all that God intended, we see how God's purpose was this, that the old order given to these people through Moses should come to an end.

It was shaking. When Jesus died upon the cross, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

[ 8 : 31 ] The old order was shaking. Not long after the ascension of Jesus, the Jewish nation was virtually destroyed.

And all their privileges, as a peculiar, separate people, peculiarly blessed and favoured of God, came to an end.

And the gospel was then to be preached in all the world. And God's purpose was then to gather together, both Jew and Gentile, without any barrier between them, without any peculiar privilege for the Jew, all to be made one in Christ Jesus.

Now, it was hard for these Jews to see that some things were being shaken and would be removed. That other things had been shaken and had already been removed.

And it was hard for them to see the wonderful privileges and blessings to which God had called them and they needed to be taught about the things that will never be shaken and never be removed.

[ 9 : 51 ] In verse 28, Paul says, We, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Now, it is not my purpose this evening, nor have I time, to dwell on that particular aspect of these words, but to use them in a more general sense and in a way which I hope will be suitable and profitable on this occasion.

There are things which are shaken and will be removed. Look back over the years.

The first place where the church met in Rowley became too small. They had to move. This place was built and a church established within this building.

A church which evidently was wonderfully blessed and which grew greatly. Now, we were told this afternoon that this building is on a rock and that, humanly speaking, it will never move.

[ 11 : 13 ] Now, friends, I want to contradict that. Not unkindly, but I want to contradict it. Because it will be. This building will not last forever.

There is a time coming when this building will move like everything else that is made. Peter tells us of this.

In the last chapter of the second epistle, he says, Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

If not before, there is a day coming when this building, along with every other building that man has made, will be dissolved in that tremendous fire which God has said will come upon the whole world.

The heavens will be rolled up as a scroll, that is, all the visible heavens will be rolled up as a scroll and the earth will melt with fervent heat and nothing that is man-made can escape that end.

[ 12 : 26 ] So, friend, strong and firm though this building appears to be, its end is certain. There are things that are ever-changing.

That brief comment I made about the state of the world, the state of people in this part of the country 175 years ago is a picture which has changed and in many ways, let us say, it has changed for the better in many ways.

It has changed for the better. So far, as our life is concerned and our way of life is concerned and the natural blessings that we enjoy in life, so far as these things are concerned, we have much to be thankful for.

There is not the excruciating poverty that there was at that time. There is not the same kind of ill health and misery that it brought today as there was in those days.

No, we have many things that God has given to us in his wise providence for which we should be very thankful. We should be thankful that there is no longer bull-baiting and bear-fighting and cock-fighting going on in this part of the country as far as I know.

[ 13 : 52 ] But there was all those years back. But there are many things which are still as they were.

There are many things which are still as they were. And I'll come to that in a few moments. So then, all around us there is change.

Things are shaken. Things change. Now you may say to me, but for 147 years there has been a believing church gathering in this area.

And for nearly 100 years a believing church gathering in this building. Will that remain? I don't know.

I don't know. God alone knows whether that will remain. You read those letters in the second and third chapters in the book of the Revelation to the seven churches of Asia.

[ 14 : 55 ] There was only one of the seven which escaped God's reproof and there were only two which were particularly commended of God and so far as I know they have all disappeared.

It is a remarkable thing that God in his mercy has seen fit to allow a church to exist in this way for 147 years.

Something for which you should give continuing thanks to God. But you know there are things which are shaking churches in our day.

There are things which are very sadly shaking churches in our day. And those things are going to issue in the removal of churches.

You know the Lord speaks of standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks. if in the midst of those seven golden candlesticks which are the seven churches he sees things which grieve him if there are things which grieve the Holy Spirit of God then there will be a consequence.

[ 16 : 24 ] If in your church life here at Rowley there are things which are grieving the Spirit of God then the consequences must follow.

We read in this chapter of such a thing as chastisement. God sometimes chastises it. If you ask me why churches die out and disappear some people would say well it's because we learn so much nowadays we are so sophisticated and knowledgeable we've outgrown our need of these old superstitions.

Now that kind of teaching has been the end of many a church. Many have begun to imbibe that attitude of mine.

again if in the life of those who profess to be believers false doctrine is introduced and instead of believing the truth of the scripture men begin to believe human doctrine then the Holy Spirit is grieved and the Holy Spirit will go from a church which entertains things which grieve the Spirit of God.

Now men like Daniel Matthew and others with him in his day were men of deep conviction. We may not have always agreed with everything that they did but one thing was this that they knew what they believed and they knew why they believed it and they never faltered in the things that they believe.

[ 18 : 20 ] Now there are things that are shaken as of things that are made a man made religion is easily shaken and if a man made religion is shaken then very soon it can be removed.

So then 147 years of history is no proof of a continuing history. We must not presume upon the past.

Our forefathers depended entirely upon the grace of God and upon the blessing of the Spirit of God and so do we. And so we must continue in those things which are plainly taught in the word of God.

There are things that are shaken that will be removed. Now you know in your own hearts friends whether you are members here or members elsewhere whether there is a shaking whether in your church life there is a shaking a turning away from the truth of the gospel a turning away from the holy principles of God's word if there is the consequences follow.

Ah now there are things then that are shaken as of things that are made. So even those churches where the gospel was once faithfully preached do sometimes come to a very sad end.

[ 20 : 08 ] My prayer along with the prayer of many others is that the testimony of this church may long continue as a testimony to the truth that the founders of this church so firmly believed.

Now we come to the second part of this text those things which cannot be shaken. There are things which cannot be shaken.

This building will one day come to nothing. The men who labored to build it have long since been laid in the grave.

Those who preached through its early years and the first two pastorates you know lasted for 95 years which is a remarkable testimony. We don't hear many pastorates like that nowadays and I should think that people who had lived under the same minister for so long could hardly begin to think that there would ever be anything else but what they were used to but the ministry of the best of ministers comes to an end.

They grow old and shaky and they are laid in the grave and you and I you and I are amongst those things that are shaking already and we shall be laid in the grave if the Lord does not return and the great question for us and the great question for men like Daniel Matthews was this have I got anything that cannot be shaken and that will remain now the contrast in our text is an implied contrast between the things that are made that is the things that are temporal the things which will not last and the things which are eternal the things which are of God these things which cannot be shaken may remain now friends very simply this evening let me remind you some of you know these things well but let me remind you of the things that do remain

[ 22 : 38 ] God remains whatever godless men may say whatever godless atheistic evolutionary ideas have done to disturb the minds of men and to mislead the minds of the young God remains the great eternal glorious self existent God I am that I am and God is not shaken or there have been some shattering events affecting the greater part of the world the greatest part of human civilization in these last hundred years God is not shaken not one thing has happened to take God by surprise not one thing outside of God's eternal inscrutable purpose God is not shaken God remains he is the same God today as he was when this church was formed and he will be the same when the world dissolves in the flames of fire the one true and living

God without beginning and without ending all glorious omnipotent the ever blessed God God remains oh how thankful some of us have been for that God this God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea I sat down there this afternoon and heard the wind whistling round this place and I felt the place move oh we should be horrified tonight if we felt the place really moving as in an earthquake shouldn't we ah but you know if there was an earthquake that shook the very ground beneath our feet the psalmist says

God is our refuge if we did see the mountains being hurled into the midst of the ocean we should say by faith God is our refuge this God the God who was the refuge and the comfort of the hearts of those believers poor though they were poor though they were to build a place like this have you ever been amazed at that poor as they were to build a place like this now God was their comfort and support in their time of need this God he never never will change his purposes we sing will ripen fast unfolding every hour the bird may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower oh if you could but see the wonderful doctrine of predestination in the light of those beautiful words you would never argue against it again if you could see

God's purpose in your life as Paul saw it in his life when he said all things work together for good to them that love God and are the call according to his purpose you would never argue against predestination again would you no you would say bless God that he is such a God who is all powerful who knows the end from the beginning there are things which cannot be shaken now secondly there is God's eternal purpose of salvation that cannot be shaken God had a purpose there in the mystery of the trinity in all eternity past there was a purpose Jesus said so his words will never be altered he says all that the father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out and he says again all mine are thine and thine are mine and

I am glorified in them now friend that goes back beyond the birth of Jesus that goes back beyond the birth of civilization that goes back into the heart of God who is eternal there is a purpose a people ordained for his praise given to his son his son receiving them and undertaking all that was necessary for them why he says none shall pluck them out of my father's hand and I and my father are one do you argue against the doctrine of election you know these things I'm trying to briefly comment on this evening lay as great foundation stones beneath the church in its earliest days here they believe the doctrine of sovereign electing love they didn't argue against it they believed it and loved it they found their souls were comforted and strengthened by it the prophet dear

[ 28 : 30 ] Jeremiah he looks at this doctrine and he says he loved me with an everlasting love and in loving kindness he drew me God told him so he believed it often the precious doctrine of God's electing love chosen in Christ ere time began I choose thee in return and that's the only way you will friend the only way you will no one ever did choose Christ but what were chosen by him first we love him because he first loved us no one ever loved God truly no one ever loved the Lord Jesus Christ with their heart but what God loved them first ah there are precious truths which cannot be shaken and will forever remain now

I want to come to the centre of it all I was very impressed as I walked in this place to see that painted invitation at the gateway and there on that invitation was what I hope and believe is a testimony to your faith Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever now in the next chapter chapter 13 verse 7 remember them which have the rule over you who have spoken unto you the word of God whose faith follow considering the end of their conversation that means the whole purpose of their life remember the whole purpose of their life and consider it the great purpose and end in their life was this Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever now friend the

Lord Jesus Christ the eternal son of God God manifest in the flesh is eternal God ever the same unalterable in his divine person and unalterable in his divine purpose the same yesterday and today and forever and if his heart is full of love for his people today it was yesterday and it will be tomorrow and the same Jesus who loved Daniel Matthew and Alfred died and the others who followed him is the same Jesus who loves his people today and friends the same Jesus who once lived and worked and taught and who once died and rose again here on this earth is the same Jesus now in heaven the same dear man in heaven now reign and lives to intercede Jesus the same yesterday today and forever he came to save his people from their sins now that is his purpose unalterable his eternal purpose he came to suffer the just for the unjust to bring us to

God now that is his same purpose today he has a people whom he will bring to God and the world will continue as long as that purpose continues and until the last is brought to God and then the world will have its end for his purpose will be completed the same yesterday and today and forever oh friend do you ever think oh that loving tender sympathizing compassion that Jesus had for his followers they were poor ignorant men they didn't know a great deal about Jesus they misunderstood a lot of things about their lord and master they needed a lot of teaching but you know he loved them and he wouldn't leave them and as time went on they learned to love him and that love deepened until it was true of them they wouldn't leave him either no says

Peter to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ now friends that is the unchanging testament of a living believer it is the testimony of this church so far as it is composed of living believers we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ these are things which cannot be shaken he is the same in his holy character oh yes the same in his holy character I had to warn my own people at home lately about this you know there is a spirit prevailing in the evangelical world today which presents the Lord Jesus Christ in such a light that people have the idea it doesn't matter how they live as long as they say

[ 34 : 19 ] I believe in Jesus now friend that is a vile devilish doctrine you'll never find it anywhere in the bible and you know one of the things that our forefathers contended for was a life consistent with a profession why because Jesus is the same and he is a holy Jesus a holy sinless spotless saviour Jesus loves holiness and those who are true Christians love what Jesus loves the same yesterday and today and forever there ah says Paul let us have grace and you can only get that from God let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear why because

Jesus is the same holy Jesus today there are things which cannot be shaken those things are things which Jesus spoke about they are the holy doctrine that fell from his lips the inspired doctrine that were in the hearts of his followers Paul Peter and others recording the holy scriptures of truth for us now those things will not ever be shaken it is one of the great testimonies to the truth of God's own revelation that not one jot nor one tittle shall pass away till all be fulfilled now friend the bible the literal bible the printed book that

Daniel Matthews used I don't doubt disintegrated long ago the truth in the book that he used is the truth in the book that I used and that you used and what is more it is the same translation that we used that he used over those hundred and forty seven years and we have reason to thank God for that as well but even if we lived in another country and needed our scriptures in another language the truth the truth is the same God ah friend this unchanging God this unchanging Jesus and this unchanging Holy Spirit who inspired holy men of all to write and who controlled them in their writing is the same Holy Spirit who works in the hearts of men and women today to give them a love for the truth do you love the truth oh say some people don't talk to me about doctrine

I'm a Christian I just love Jesus I don't want to hear about doctrine I don't read my Bible now what's that got to do with the sort of life and testimony that our forefathers left behind they took their Bibles away from the parish church or they had them at home and they read them and they found in their Bibles that there was such a thing as the baptism of believing men and women and they were Baptists by conviction now they found these things in their Bible what do you find in yours what do you find in yours their church life was modelled upon what they believe in and through the scriptures of truth they were added to the church such as should be saved in the way in which they were added to the church at the time of

Pentecost they were baptized and they continue in the apostles doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers now do you find that in your Bible is that Bible that you read inspired of the spirit of God is it unchanging truth then friends I believe that that will be the way the true church will organize its life to the end of time and I believe that that is the way the Holy Spirit will lead believing people to walk down to the end of time the membership of this church has changed a number of times since that first day but you know the form of the church remains so far as it was scriptural remains unaltered unaltered unaltered it never was God's purpose to gather together all and sundry into a thing called a church and pretend that they were all believers it never was no says

[ 39 : 54 ] Paul to the Ephesians you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin that was his purpose to quicken dead sinners into spiritual life we read in that same epistle to the Ephesians there is one God one father one lord and there is one baptism ah yes now friends these things have not changed they cannot be shaken they will remain until the end of time now lastly let us think of it in this way Jesus said regarding those whom he purposed to bless I give unto them eternal life now this natural life is coming to its end the life of the world is hastening on to its end but

Jesus said I give to my sheep eternal life and they shall never perish now friends that will remain though your body lay in the grave though you take your last breath eternal life through Jesus Christ remains so says Paul we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear now have you received a kingdom does Christ rule a king in your heart has he blessed you with spiritual life whereby you respond to him as that king with living faith and submission and a gracious obedience to his word and his command a kingdom a kingdom which cannot be removed

Christ setting up a kingdom in your heart the kingdom of God which is within you who are true believers this kingdom never will be shaken and always will remain now earlier in this chapter Paul directs the eyes of these people in a strange direction he says ye are come unto mount Zion that is to Jesus Christ for he is king in Zion and unto the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem that is the spiritual church of the living God and to an innumerable company of angels to the general assembly and church of the firstborn the church that belongs to Jesus Christ the firstborn of God which are written in heaven and to

God the judge of all and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling now friend those things they have never shaken they never will be removed like all things which are man made but those things which God himself purposes which God himself does will never be shaken but will remain I pray God it might be his gracious will that a church a believing spiritually minded gracious obedient church of Jesus Christ shall continue to gather within these walls but whether it does or not one thing I do know the true believing spiritual church of Jesus Christ will continue in the world down to the end of time and every member of that church possesses a life which they will never lose even eternal life through

Jesus Christ our Lord Amen Amen Amen Amen Que Thank you.

[ 44 : 57 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

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[ 51 : 27 ] Thank you.