

The Progress of the Soul

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Psalm 130

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Now let's turn again to Psalm 130. Now, there will be those in the congregation this morning who have not entered the first stage of redemption. You have not entered the first experience of grace. You will not understand some of these things that I will have to say as we go into the message. But I want you to listen. And may God the Holy Spirit bring you to enter in to this experience of grace, this relationship with Christ? It is more than a public profession. It is more than mental agreement with terms and creeds and doctrines. It is an experience.

And then there are those in the congregation who are somewhere in between. You have experienced conviction. You have been brought to faith in Christ. God is working repentance in you, faith in you. But your growth, your maturity, your spiritual maturity has not been developed. May God the Holy Spirit bring you a special message?

And then there are those who can walk every step of the way through this Psalm. You have walked there. You are walking there. You will walk there. When I talk about the progress of the soul I am not talking about a man begins in conviction and grows to maturity and this is where he is and he never experiences this again. He experiences the whole Psalm, all the time. We start in conviction and we grow to maturity. But we never get beyond conviction. We come through conviction, repentance, faith, knowledge, but we never get beyond conviction and repentance. We continue to repent.

So the progress of the soul is this. We have experienced these things. We are experiencing them and we shall still experience this.

Well, let's look, first of all, at verse one in Psalm 130. The first thing we encounter here is conviction, an awareness of sin, a knowledge of sin. He says, "Out of the depths, out of the depths have I cried unto thee, oh Lord." Have you ever really been there? Have you really ever really experienced the convicting work of the Holy Spirit? When God reveals to you and to me our sin.

Listen to David. "Innumerable evils have compassed me about. Mine iniquities have taken hold of me so that I am not able to look up." Have you ever been there? "They are more than the hairs of my head. Therefore my heart faileth me, oh God...oh God, be pleased to deliver me. Oh God, make haste to help me out of the depths, out of the depths of conviction, out of the depths of sin, out of the depths of despair. Innumerable

evils have encompassed me. My iniquities have taken hold of me in such a way that I can't even look up."

The publican was that. The Scripture says he wouldn't even so much as lift his eyes to heaven. But he smote on his breast and he cried, "Oh God, be merciful to me the sinner."

Jonah was there. Jonah said, "Out of the depths, out of death, out of hell I cried unto thee."

Blind Bartimaeus was there. He sat by the wayside and in his blindness reached out and cried, "Jesus, thou Son of David, don't leave me. Help me. Have mercy on me." He cried out of darkness.

Have you ever been there?

The thief on the cross was there. He said, "Dost thou not fear God seeing thou art in the same condemnation and we, indeed, justly? Oh Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

The harlot was there who knelt at the feet of our Lord and bathed his feet with tears and dried them with the hair of her head, the point of desperation, the point of despair. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee."

Now you can't go any further down this road until you have been there. That is where it all starts. Someone said, "Deep places beget deep feelings. Deep feelings beget deep emotions." And the rarest pearls in the kingdom of God are found in the deepest seas."

God does not hear some men because they don't cry. God does not hear some men because they do not cry out of sincerity and out of the depths and out of truth. But God always hears those who cry out of the depths. When we are strong and prosperous our prayers come from our lips. When we are broken, convicted and in trouble our prayers come from our hearts. And those are the ones God hears. And he doesn't hear any others. And that is the reason David said, "Out of the depths out of the depths of sin and iniquity and transgression have I cried unto thee oh Lord. Hear my voice."

Turn back to Psalm 107. Here is a picture of it. Here is a picture of it. In Psalm 107 beginning with verse two. Now, as I said, as we make progress the growth and the progress of the soul, we never get beyond this. I don't care if a man has.

You say, "Yes, I have experienced conviction."

Don't you still?

"Oh, I have experienced an awareness of sin."

Don't you still?

“Oh, I have felt my iniquities against God.”

Don't you still?

You don't get beyond this. You may be convicted and repent and believe and grow in grace, but you still come back here. In Psalm 107, “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy and gathered them out of the lands from the east and from the west, from the north and the south.” Now look at verse four. “They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way. They found no city to dwell in, hungry and thirsty.”

This is spiritual condition. This is not talking about physical hunger. “Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them and then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, in their trouble.” And he delivered them out of their distresses.

Have you ever been there?

Look at verse 11. “They rebelled against the Word of God. They condemned the council of the most high. Therefore he brought down their heart with labor.”

The fell down. There was none to help. Have you ever been there? And then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, in their trouble. And he delivered them out of their distresses.

So that is the beginning. That is the point where we start conviction, conviction, an awareness of sin.

And then we go to verse two. “Lord, hear my voice. Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.” A man who is deeply aware and deeply convicted of his sin will cry for help. He will cry to the one who can help him. As blind Bartimaeus said, “Jesus, thou Son of David have mercy on me.” As the woman with the issue of blood who had tried many physicians and everything failed. She said, “If I can get to Christ, if I can get to Jesus of Nazareth I will be made whole.”

Now, here is sincere prayer. “Lord, hear my voice.” There are five conditions of true, sincere prayer. Now everyone of us, pastor, elders, deacons, teachers, older people, children, every one of us can learn something here about prayer. We certainly need to learn something about prayer. Everything that is called prayer is not prayer. I am persuaded that most of our prayer is sinful prayer. I am persuaded that most of our prayer is ceremonial. It is ritualistic. It is sentimental. It is not of God.

Now here are five marks of sincere, true prayer. Number one, it is always a humble prayer. “Out of the depths have I cried.” Out of the depths of sin. Out of the depths of helplessness. That is where Peter was as he was sinking beneath the waves. And he cried, “Lord, save me or I perish. Save me or I perish.”

All prayer that is heard of God and all prayer that is motivated by the Holy Spirit and all prayer that is true and comes from the heart always comes from a broken heart, not a proud heart. God resisteth the proud. God giveth grace to the humble. A proud spirit, a haughty spirit is always preceding a fall. And, secondly, if it is true prayer it is not only humble, but it is fervent. "Lord, out of the depths, the depths of sin and helplessness have I cried. I cried." Ceremonial prayer, a form of prayer, ritualistic prayer is as useless as reciting "Mary had a little lamb." You might as well bow your head and recite, "Mary had a little lamb," if it is not fervent prayer.

"I have cried unto thee."

Romans chapter eight, verse 26 talks about groanings which cannot be uttered. We are not heard for our much speaking. We are not heard for our repetitious praises. We are not heard for our eloquence. We are heard for our sincerity. And so prayer that is true it is humble prayer. It comes from a broken spirit, a broken heart and it is fervent. Lord, out of the depths have I cried.

And then, thirdly, prayer that is heard is prayer directed to God unto thee, not prayer to Mary, not prayer to a saint, not prayer to a supreme being, but a cry and a call to the living God.

I want you to turn to 1 Kings 18. Let me show you a prayer here. And I know this prayer was heard and I know this prayer was answered because it says in 1 Kings 18:38, "Then the fire of the Lord fell." Then it fell at the close of this prayer. Here is a man, Elijah, a man of God, a man of like passions as you and me.

You say, "Well, he is a special man."

No. In a sense he is, but in a sense he is not. He is a man of like passions as you and I. That is what the Scripture says in the book of James.

So here he is on Mount Carmel when he was having this conflict with the prophets of Baal. And it came his time to pray. They had cut themselves and moaned and groaned and screamed and yelled and gone through all the ceremonies and rituals and their evil thoughts God had not heard. And then Elijah stepped forth.

Listen to this prayer, 63 words, that's all, such an eventful time, such an important time. Everything hinging on this, the queen and all of her princes and captains and generals were against this man, the 450 prophets of Baal against him. The people were standing around watching, such an important time. And yet 63 words. That was all he prayed.

And he came near and he said in verse 36, the time of the evening sacrifice. He came near and said, "Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, oh Lord, hear me." Do you see the fervency? Do you see the sincerity?

“That this people may know that thou art the Lord God and that thou hast turned their hearts back again.” And then the fire of the Lord came.

This was directed to God, a humble prayer, a fervent prayer, directed to the Lord. “Lord, hear me.” And then, fourthly, it is a reverent prayer. Prayer that is sincere, prayer that is heard is a reverent prayer.

Notice here in Psalm 130, “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, oh Lord. Lord, here my voice.”

Our master said, “You call me Lord and you say well for so I am.” It is not “Sweet Jesus.” It is not “Blessed Jesus.” Though he is sweet, though he is blessed, but, my friends, when we approach the throne of grace let us never forget that it is a throne of grace. It is a throne of grace. He is still the king. He is still the Lord. He still says, “Ask anything according to my will. And that leper, he caught the tune when he said, “Lord, if you will you can make me clean. And this is a reverent prayer.

Let us not get to the place where we have an over familiarity with the living God.

And then, last of all, it is a personal prayer. Now, these are the marks of true prayer. It has got to be a humble prayer. “Out of the depths, out of where I am, not what I profess to be, out of where I am, not who I profess to be, Lord, this is me. You know me. You know what I am. You know who I am. You know what I have done. Out of the depths, out of where I am I cry fervently unto thee directly. I cry unto thee.”

It is a reverent Lord. “Oh Lord, oh Lord, hear my voice, my voice. Hear my supplication. I cry to thee. Hear my voice, my supplication.”

This is something I wish that I could teach this morning.

Turn to Matthew chapter six, Matthew chapter six. I covet for myself and for you more of this, true, sincere, heart felt, genuine, God honoring prayer. And it is not public prayer that I am so concerned about. It is private prayer. In Matthew chapter six, verse five, now here is the Lord speaking himself. Listen to what he says. “And when you pray don’t be like the hypocrites. They love to pray standing in church in the synagogue. They love to pray in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men.”

Now I am not against praying. We have got to have public prayer. We must have it. We are commanded to...Men ought always to pray. In the book of Corinthians it talks about the giving of thanks and others saying, “Amen,” to it. Prayer is a part of our worship. We sing praising God. We read the Scripture, teaching the things of God. We fellowship one with another. We edify one another. We strengthen one another. We pray. I lead in prayer. Don leads in prayer. One of these other men lead in prayer. And public prayer is necessary. It is all right with me. I think it is wonderful praying on the street corner, praying in restaurants, praying other places. If you feel led that way, if you are motivated that way, wonderful. It is a good testimony, but never to be seen of men. If that is our

motive, if that is what is motivating us, that is not prayer. It may be ritual and it may be ceremony, but it is not pray.

Now, listen to this. When you pray, verse six, “But when you pray enter into your closet.” That doesn’t...Our Lord is not saying there anymore than he is saying, “If your right hand offend you, cut it off.” Don’t you dare cut your hand off. Don’t you dare mutilate your body by plucking your eye out. The Lord is teaching us something. And when the Lord says, “Enter your closet,” he is not saying, “Go into a place four feet wide by three feet by so many feet high and shut door in the damp cold closet of darkness. He is talking about getting alone. And when you shut the door you pray to your Father in secret. This is the prayer that I covet. This is the prayer that is called for.

In verse seven, “Don’t use vain repetitions.”

You say, “Well, preacher. I find it so hard to pray.”

Now wait a minute. Here is what you are thinking. You hear a man who...we have some men in this church that pray well publicly. And you hear them pray and you hear they are well versed in the Scripture. They have been doing this a long time and they are good at praying publicly. But you don’t have to say the same things they say. It is not the repetition of praise. It is not using the right words. That is not it. That is what the heathen think, that they shall be heard for their much speaking. “Be not like unto them,” verse eight. “Your Father knows what things you have need of before you ever ask him.”

I’ll tell you. You can get alone in your bedroom, in your study or somewhere. And I am not talking about just driving your car down the road. I hear people talking...and I do that, too, and that is fine. But that is still not it. And I am not talking about it while you are washing dishes either. That is still not it. And I am not talking about when you are walking down the street. That is still not it. Now, this kind of praying that I am referring to here is when you actually take a time and you go in, when the kids are at school and your husband is at work and you go into your bedroom and shut the door and get down on your knees before God. And it is not the body or form that God sees or that God hears. That is not it either. But it...when we are before the Lord I believe the humility of our hearts will force us to take a humble position physically. And we get on our knees and we talk to the Lord. And we talk to him about the Church and we talk to him about the people. We talk to him about the pastor. We talk to him about the Word of God. We talk to him about our children. We talk to him about our husbands. We talk to him about our own failures and our own sins and our own shortcomings and our own imperfections. We talk to the Lord in your own words. Don’t try to use repetitious phrases. Don’t try to use what you have heard somebody else say.

Just say, “Lord, here I am. And you know me and you know I love you and you know I love your Word. And, Lord, I wish you would teach me your Word and I wish you would bless our church and I wish you would bless our home. And if it can be your will to solve this problem, I would be much obliged.”

You can talk that way. That is praying. And that is what I want us to have more of. You men, you come in and go somewhere and close the door and pray. And if you are not doing this, well I caution you. You are missing a blessing and you are failing your family and you are failing your church and you are robbing yourself of some great blessing if you are not doing this. And I ask you and I pray with you and I urge you to have some personal prayer.

That is what David is saying here. Out of the depths...we are nobody. We are nothing. Paul says, "I am nothing, one nothing to another nothing."

"But out of the depths, where I am who I am, I cry to thee, oh Lord. Hear my voice. Hear my voice and let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication."

Now we are getting somewhere close to praying. And this is essential and I urge it upon you.

Now, the third thing, verse three, "If thou, oh Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, oh Lord, who can stand?"

Have you ever been here? Now, have you ever been to a place of real conviction? Do you know who you are? Do you know what you have done? Do you know how you have sinned against God? Have you been to the place of prayer? Do you pray? And here is the third. Have you been to the judgment? Now listen to these statements. This is true. No man, no woman is coming to the throne of grace until they, first of all, go to the throne of judgment. No way. No man is going to come to the cross, no woman is going to go to the cross until they have been stripped by the law. No man is coming to Calvary until he has been to Sinai. Now that is so. Scripture says if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged. What does that mean? It means to justify God in his judgments. It means this. It means to say, "Lord, if you didn't choose to give me another blessing you would be just. Lord, if you were not pleased to save my soul you would be just. Lord, if you sent me to hell you would give me just exactly what I deserve. Lord, if you flooded my life and my soul and my family with troubles, you would be giving me exactly what I deserve. That is what I am talking about."

Now, turn to Psalm 51. That is what David is saying here in Psalm 51. You know somebody said this one time, "When a man acknowledges, when a man acknowledges, a woman acknowledges that he deserves to be sent to hell then he finally is coming to adore the true and righteous and living God."

Listen to Psalm 51, verse three. "I acknowledge my transgressions. My sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." There. Here is the key. "That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and clear when thou judgest."

Do you know what he is doing here? He is justifying God in his righteous condemnation of all our sins. "God, you are right."

That is what the thief said on the cross. "Lord, I am getting what I deserve."

Listen to Jacob over in Genesis 32. Here is a Scripture worthy to be marked in your Bible, Genesis chapter 32. And this is something that we need to learn, every one of us. I need to learn it. You do. In Genesis 32, verse nine. I want you to listen to this, Genesis 32:9, "And Jacob said," you ought to circle this. "Oh God of my Father Abraham and God of my Father Isaac, the Lord which said unto me 'Return to your country and to your kindred and I will deal well with you.' I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which though hast showed unto thy servant."

Have you ever been there? That is what I am talking about. I am talking about us justifying God. I have heard people say when they have had a tragedy, "Why me?" I have heard people say when they lost a loved one, "Why did this happen to me?" I have heard people say when they are discouraged and depressed, "Well, why is the Lord bringing this upon me?"

Well, you see, you are not there yet. When you grow in grace, when you come to know him and know yourself, you will accept whatever judgment, whatever condemnation, whatever trial, whatever burden, you will accept it from the hand of God as being absolutely just. And you will accept every blessing from his hand as being undeserved mercy. And you will say with Jacob, "I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies, not the least of them."

All right, look at verse four. Here is the next one. The progress of the soul. I have been to the depths. I am there now. I will be there tomorrow. Out of the depths have I cried. Every time I cry it is out of the depths. But it is fervent. It is sincere. It is humble. It is genuine. It is unto the Lord. It is my personal cry. "And, Lord, if you would mark iniquity I wouldn't stand. They wouldn't stand. Nobody would stand. Who would stand if God would this moment judge us according to his holy righteous judgments apart from Christ?"

And look at the next verse, "But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared."

I want to show you something here. Somebody said that these two verses, verse three and four, look at them. "Lord if you should mark iniquity, if you should judge men solely on the basis of what they have done, what they have thought, what they have said, what they have imagined, who would stand? But there is forgiveness with thee."

Somebody said, "The sum of the whole Scripture, all the word of God, is right here in these two verses. The whole message of the Bible is summed up right here in these two verses." Sin, its universality, sin, in its fatal, damning condemning condition against God and salvation. There is forgiveness with thee, sovereign, free, eternal, full, merciful. Here are the two mountains, Sinai and Calvary. Here are the two messages, all have sinned. The gift of God is eternal life. But there is forgiveness with thee.

The Old Testament tells us that with its sacrifices, the lambs, the bullocks, the altars, the sacrifices the priests. What did all of it mean? It means there is forgiveness. The New Testament tells us this. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. God spared not his own Son. Christ died on the cross." What does all this mean? There is forgiveness.

And throughout the Scriptures there is example after example after example of forgiveness.

Am I a blasphemer? So was Saul of Tarsus. Am I thief? So was the one who hung upon the cross. Am I an adulterer? So was David. Am I a fallen woman? So was the harlot, so was Magdalena. Am I an idolater? So was Abraham. Am I a Christ denier? So was Peter. But there is forgiveness.

"Oh Lord, if thou shouldest charge sin, if thou shouldest mark sin, if thou shouldest judge sin, solely on the basis of righteousness and holiness, who would stand? Nobody. But thank God there is forgiveness. There is forgiveness with thee in Christ, because of Christ, through the blood of Christ."

Look at this last line. I don't want to get away from it without mentioning this last line, verse four. "That thou mayest be feared."

Well, there is a [?]. There is an awe as we approach the holy God. But this fear here he is talking about something else. Faith and repentance bind us to God with a beautiful fear. Do you know what it is? And I have this. I know exactly what he is talking about here. I believe some of you do. I fear to lose one bit of his love. I fear to depart from his presence. I fear to bring reproach on his matchless name. I fear error. I fear missing Christ. I think Paul did.

He said, "I don't want to preach to others and then become a castaway." He said, "I count all things but loss that I may win Christ and be found in him. Whatever I miss I don't want to miss Christ."

Now verse five. Here is hope. See how the progress...see how this barometer, see how this psalm measures the growth of the soul and the progress of the soul from conviction, the crying to God, to acknowledging sin, to judging myself? Judge yourselves. Quit judging others and judge yourself. Take your place before God as a sinner. He said, "I didn't come to call the righteous. Don't go about trying to prove how righteous you are. Christ said I came to call sinners. We are, all of us, are given to justifying ourselves.

What did you do that for?

"Well, I'll tell you why I did it."

Now just hush. Why don't you just say, "I shouldn't have." No, we have got a reason. We have got to justify ourselves. We are in the business not only in church and on our jobs and in our homes, that is what starts most arguments in the home, justifying ourselves. We justify what we think. We justify what we do. We justify how we feel. We justify ourselves. And we need to get in the business of justifying God.

We are never going to come to the place of forgiveness until we come to the place of judgment. That is what Christ said, "If thy brother sin against thee and if he repents, forgive him." But here is our problem. There is no repentance. There is no repentance. If he sins against thee seven times a day and if he repents, forgive him. But there is no repentance, there is no justifying God.

But here is hope. When we come to the place of forgiveness there is hope. He said, verse five, "I wait for the Lord and in his Word do I hope. I wait for the Lord. I expect him to come in mercy." He said, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us." I expect him to speak peace to my heart. I expect it. Do you? I expect him to forgive my sins. I expect him to bring Christ to my heart. But I wait. I cry to him, but I wait. I seek the Lord, but I wait. I confess my sins, but I wait.

And I will say this and I hope you listen carefully to this, I am against present day evangelism. I think it is wrong. I think that the methods that are being used today are wrong. I think the methods in evangelism that is being used today they are filling the churches with unsaved people. They are giving false hope to sinners.

I would say: Beware of anyone who tries to push you into a religious profession. Beware of anyone who tries to push you into a religious decision. Beware of anyone who tries to push you into the place of peace.

Verse five says, "I wait for the Lord." Out of the depths I cry. I am convicted of my sin. I know what I am. I know who I am. I cry to God fervently and humbly and sincerely. I cry to God. And I know if God would judge me as I ought to be judged and by his holy righteous standards I would be damned. But I know there is forgiveness with God. He forgave Saul. He forgave David. He forgave Peter. He forgave James. He forgave Magdalena. He forgave these others. But I wait on the Lord. I wait on the Lord. I hope in his Word. I trust in his Word.

Turn to Psalm 27. I would command every sinner to repent. I would command every sinner to believe. I would command every sinner to seek the Lord. But while we are repenting and believing and seeking the Lord, I would say I would caution you to wait upon the Lord. Let him speak peace. Don't let some preacher give you peace. Let him give you rest. Don't look for some evangelist to give you rest. Look at verse 14 of Psalm 27. "Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord."

"He that believeth shall not make haste."

And David said here in Psalm 130. "I wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." This is a supreme cry and desire of my soul, to know him.

And then, verse seven. We have here confidence and assurance. And this is my last point. In verse seven, "Let Israel hope in the Lord for with the Lord there is mercy and with him there is plenteous redemption." His love hath no limit. "Though your sins be as scarlet, I make them white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

His grace has no measure. His power has no boundary known unto men for out of his infinite riches in Jesus he giveth and giveth and giveth again. I read a story one time, a preacher talked about a little rat. Harvest was over and the silos were full, completely full, all of the silos, the barn, the corn was there and all of the grain. And this little rat came with his companion into the silo and he started eating and eating and eating. And he was eating so rapidly and the other little rat said, "Why are you eating so fast?"

He said, "Well, I just don't want it to run out."

And the other little rat looked around and saw that huge silo and the one next to it and he said, "I don't think there is any danger of your exhausting your supply."

And I say that to every person seeking the Lord. His love has no limit. His grace has no measure. It is impossible for me or for you to exhaust his supply of grace and his supply of love and his supply of mercy. It is unlimited. With him there is plenteous redemption.

And verse eight says, "And he shall redeem us from all our iniquities."

Now here is the thing to remember. This thing of growth in grace. I want to grow in grace. I have a horrible fear of remaining the same. I think anything that is alive grows. I we are alive spiritually we grow. We grow in grace. We grow in the knowledge of Christ. We grow in the fruit of the Spirit. We grow in love and faith and meekness and humility and longsuffering and patience and gentleness and kindness and all of these things mentioned in the Scripture.

But let me warn you. We don't grow by claims of piety and claims of righteousness to where we can come to a certain point and look back and say, "I have come this far and you haven't." We may come to this point of great love, but we are still down here at this point of great sin. We may come to this point of great joy, but we also experience great sorrow. We may come to this point of meekness, but we know there is enough pride in every one of us to send us to hell. Are you seeing what I am saying?

I fear this thing of spiritual maturity that does not always admit our spiritual inability. I fear this thing of growing in knowledge and not remembering that we are but fools.

A Christian is a paradox. He is full, full of God's grace, but he is empty. And he will be the first one to tell you. He is clothed in the righteousness of Christ, but he knows he is

naked. He lives in Christ, but yet he can say, "I am dead, crucified with Christ." He is rich. The unsearchable riches of Christ are his, but he still knows that he is the poorest one of all. And God has taught him many things and he feels that he can teach others, but he also knows this. That he who thinks he knows, knows not as he ought to know and he needs to be taught as a little child.

Our Father, bless this Word that we have studied today, how rich, how precious. And we pray that it may be applied to my heart, to the heart of every person here. Lord, do a work of grace in our souls, in our hearts. Reveal thyself to us. Give us a spirit of prayer, the spirit of humility, the spirit of grace. Let not our relationship with thee be based upon doctrine or on ceremony or ritualism. But let it be a living experience in our souls and in our hearts.

Oh Lord, out of the depths have I cried unto thee. Lord, hear my voice. Hear my supplication. You know with thee there is plenteous redemption, yet we justify thee in thy judgments and in thy condemnation. Speak to us according to thy will we pray in Christ's name. Amen.