

The Challenge of Every Christian - Part 5

by Alan Redpath

Alan Redpath emphasizes the inexhaustible grace of God and the importance of effective communication of Christ in the life of every believer.

Duration: 59:34

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 4:23, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 9:10, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:13, 1 Peter 3:15

Topics: "Challenge"

Description

The sermon transcript is focused on the theme of communicating Christ and the challenges faced by Christians in doing so. The speaker emphasizes the need for revival and the love of Christ as the motive for sharing the message. The importance of discipline and seeking God's face is highlighted, along with the need to examine one's actions and sowing. The speaker also emphasizes the consequences of sowing to the flesh versus sowing to the Spirit, and the importance of showing God that one means business in order to receive His abundant grace. The sermon concludes with the reminder that there are no shortcuts to holiness.

Transcript

We're going to turn to this passage which Mr. Wendell has read to us. 2 Corinthians chapter 9. Now for my small share in this ministry and this privilege of fellowship this week, we have been taking a theme in these morning sessions and considering the challenge to every Christian to communicate Christ. On Monday we thought about communication.

Revival. The revival of the life and power of the Spirit of God in every believer. On Tuesday we thought of the motive.

The love of Christ constrains us. That love which just fills our hearts and which so desperately needs to be revealed to the world. On Wednesday morning we thought about the message which we must communicate.

That of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. Expressed in the life of the love of God. And revealing the real happiness and real peace in a world which is refusing authority at every level.

Last evening we thought about the one thing which blocks communication. The demand for our own Ishmael. For our own way.

And I trust that many of us faced reality last evening and submitted to the plan of God. But that's only the beginning. I remember when he was married.

And he turned to his bride and said to her, well thank God that's all over. And she said my dear it's only just beginning. And when you face the crisis in the Christian life.

Where you're saying with all your heart and looking into the face of Jesus. And you're saying Lord it's no longer me but Christ. That's just the beginning.

The beginning of what Hudson Taylor describes as the exchange life. In which it's no more what Hudson Taylor does for God that matters. It's what God does in and through Hudson Taylor.

I hope all of you have read or will read. His wonderful life story. Which is written in two volumes.

The growth of a work and the growth of a soul. Indispensable in every minister's library. Now today I want to take this passage of scripture and speak to you.

About the life of continuance. And taking as my text and basis for the message. But seeing it in the like of its context.

Second Corinthians the eighth. God is able to make all grace abound toward you. That you always having all sufficiency.

In all things may abound. Unto every good work. Now you will observe as we read this passage this morning.

That this wonderful text or verse comes right at the very heart. Of an earnest appeal that Paul is making. For financial help from the Corinthian church.

To the Christians at Jerusalem. He has boasted everywhere of their generosity. And he writes about the matter in case his boasting proves empty.

And he writes to the Corinthian church to ensure. That their promised contribution would be ready. When Titus comes.

And not have to be wrung out of them by pressure. And I trust that that will be the experience. In our faith from his eyes and on the Lord's day.

God loves a hilarious giver. And each must give as he purposes in his heart. But finance is not the burden of my message.

That's secondary. That takes care of itself. Paul is lifting this whole matter of finance.

Into a deep spiritual area. And laying down a principle. Which goes to the very heart of the Christian life.

And I have and want to call it. Law of supply and demand. That is what this chapter is all about.

God's law of supply and demand. And I'll just give you the three points. That we're going to look at today.

And then we'll see the ground along which we're traveling. There is first of all here in this verse. A provision that is absolutely inexhaustible.

A provision that is inexhaustible. God is able to make all grace abound toward you. And that leads to a practice that is inevitable.

That you always having all sufficiency. In all things may abound to every good work. And this all results.

Because of a principle that is inescapable. Verse six. He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly.

He which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully. Now let's just for a minute or two. Consider this provision that is inexhaustible.

The Christian life in all its varied experiences. Is no more and no less than the outflow from the fountain of life. Whose source is at the very throne of God.

You remember that Jesus said to the woman of Samaria. That drinketh of the water that I give him shall never thirst. Never thirst.

For the water that I shall give him shall be in him. Not a well but a fountain. A fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.

Now bless the Lord. That's his plan for you and his plan for me. An outflow of life that has its source from the throne of God.

That comes to us at the moment when we are born fresh. An outflow of life from the great giving of God in Jesus Christ. And you notice how Paul piles on the superlative.

God is able to make all great abound. And that word abound is the same word as is in Matthew 5 and verse 20. Where Jesus said accept your righteousness.

Exceed the word, exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. God is able to make all great exceed toward you. In order that you may have all sufficiency.

And that word sufficiency is the same word as Paul uses in writing to Timothy. In the first epistle and the sixth chapter and the sixth verse where he says. Godliness with contentment is great gain.

Contentment, that's the word. So that you may have all content in all things. So you see friend, when you're living in the plan of God it takes the pressures off.

It takes the heat off. And you have all sufficiency in all things. I may have said to you before, I've got the world's best forgettery.

I can't remember. But God's purpose is to make us all like Jesus. And he achieves this by enlargement through pressure.

You see men in a burning fiery furnace, that's pressure. And in it they meet one like unto the Son of God, that's enlargement. And I don't know about you, but I believe in every Christian life.

God is constantly putting us through pressure. In order that we may find sufficiency. I wonder what God has been putting you through these days.

You remember that wonderful verse in 1 Corinthians chapter 10. God will not suffer you to be tempted beyond that you're able to bear. But will with the temptation, not before it, and not after it.

But will with it. With the temptation provide a way of escape that you may be able to run away. No I see some shaking of heads.

I must have got that wrong. Provide a way of escape that you may be able to bear it. But friend, if God provides a way of escape, what do you want a way of escape for? You don't want to, you want a way of escape only that you might get out of it.

Oh no. He will provide a way of escape that you may be able to bear it. I never understood that verse really.

Until one day I saw in a factory a man testing a most valuable piece of machinery. Actually it was part of an aeroplane engine that was being made. And he was putting this machinery under pressure.

Severe pressure. And he had a safety gauge. Which marked the pressure, the point at which the pressure reached danger.

And he knew that if it got beyond that, it would damage this machinery beyond repair. So he was submitting this machinery to intense pressure. And that gauge was gradually mounting until it reached danger.

At that point, he released a safety valve. In order to allow the pressure to escape. So the way of escape was not for the machine, but for the pressure.

Now that threw tremendous light to me upon that verse in 1 Corinthians 10. He will not allow you to be tested beyond that you are able to bear. But will with patience, with the test, find a way of escape.

For the pressure. So that you may be able to bear it. So that you may be able to stand in the pressure.

Now you see, he has promised us that all grace will abound toward us. So that we may be having all sufficiency in all things. And that we may abound to every good work.

So that in our Christian lives there is no situation. There is no pressure. There is no circumstance.

In unable to stand. Because his grace is sufficient. It is all grace.

And is abounding grace. Do you find that today? What a wonderful thing it is to find contentment in Jesus. What does he mean by grace? Well of course, that's one word which sums up all the blessings that come to us undeservedly through Christ.

Primarily I suppose the word grace means a disposition in the heart of God. In the nature of God. And it's revealed in his undeserved, spontaneous, eternal, pardoning love.

But God's dispositions are never idle. And so grace means love in action. Expressed in a love that knows no end of its endurance.

No end of its patience. No fading of its hope. Grace is God's love in action.

But grace is never fruitless. And therefore the greatest meaning of the word is all the blessings and all the lovely beautiful things. That take place in a life in which the indwelling Christ has come.

To reveal his glory. Grace is love in action. Grace is God's love in action.

But grace in my life is God's love revealed in my heart. Very briefly and inadequately that grace which results in the fruit of the spirit revealed in my life. Galatians 5, 22.

The ninefold fruit of the spirit. Love in action. In action in the heart of God.

In action in the life of the Christian. In the life of every one of God's redeemed people. Therefore grace be gracious.

Get that. Grace results in graciousness. God is able to make all grace abound toward you.

There are not many graces. There's only one. And that which God in his grace gives to us is what? It's Jesus.

And that grace. Oh it's many sided in its expression. But it's one in its source.

Jesus only. God is able to make Jesus abound in your life. Now my friend.

You can never have all the gifts of the spirit. That's controversial territory. I'll leave that for tomorrow.

We're getting near the end of the week and you won't be able to climb on my back for long then. I'll leave that for tomorrow. You can't have all the gifts.

You can have all the grace. And the two are in a totally different character, category. Don't confuse them.

You can have all of Jesus. Indeed. It is Paul's prayer, you remember? For the church at Ephesus.

Which is more a circular letter than a letter to a local church. When he prayed that you might be filled up with all the fullness of God. What a wonderful thing.

That you can have all of God in you. And when God gives himself. He doesn't do it reluctantly.

With a little finger of his hand open. And let out a little at a time. But God's hands, God's nail pierced hands are wide open.

And this house is all pouring itself out. With no limitation on heaven's side. And I remember a husband and wife.

Who had about three or four children. And the wife went away for the weekend. And took with her all of the kids except one.

And he was the smallest of all of them. He was a little boy. So his daddy was left at home.

With a task of caring for this little boy. He hadn't done it before. He was a bit scared.

And the little boy wasn't quite knowing what was going to happen. And so his daddy took him into his bedroom at night to sleep. In his little bed for him.

And that little boy wouldn't stop talking. Talked on and on and on. Which of course was revealing that he wasn't quite at home.

Felt a bit nervous. And his daddy said will you be quiet. And so he settled down.

The boy thought the boy was quiet. No he began to talk again. He said will you stop talking.

Be quiet and go to sleep. So there wasn't a sound. And then daddy.

Oh his father thought here we are again. Daddy. And his father said.

Oh yes what is it. Daddy. Is your face turned this way.

And he said yes son it is. Thank you daddy. And there wasn't any more.

Not another sound. The boy went to sleep. Calvary tells me that God's face is always turned my way.

And he doesn't give. With a little finger. And all the others tight shut.

He gives with open hands. Open hands on which there has been the pinch of a nail. And he gives and gives and gives again.

There is never any limitation in God's signs. No wonder that Paul concludes this chapter. Thanks be unto God for us a peaceful day.

Now because of this provision that is inexhaustible. And never runs out and never runs dry. And never grows stale and never is limited.

And is always coming to us like a fountain that pouring out from the heart of God. Then that must lead to a practice that is inevitable. That you having all sufficiency in all things.

May abound unto every good work. Now you see the result of this absolutely inexhaustible supply from God. From his side must lead to the experience of.

If I may use the expression the base, the receptacle of my life always being full. If God is always giving I must always be receiving. And that's the thrilling thing about the Christian life.

As long as I go on receiving. As long as I go on believing I go on receiving. And so my life and your life ought to be full.

And Christian experience is an ever increasing capacity for the fullness of God in my heart. That's God's intention for me. As Jesus put it.

He that believeth into me. How to his inner man shall flow. A trickle? No.

A drop? No. A river? No. A stream? No.

Rivers of living water. This spake he of the Holy Spirit. Which they that believe on him should receive.

My grace is sufficient for you. I think that's the understatement of history. A masterly divine understatement.

Isn't it any more than sufficient? Oh yes I suppose so. But how much more do I need than sufficiency? Do I need anything more than that? The only place where you have sufficiency is in the heart of God. The only place where you have enough is in Jesus.

His grace is always proportioned. I trust you're enjoying that this morning. Because when I enter into the knowledge that this is always enough for me.

That takes, it takes all the drudgery out of Christian living and turns it into luxury. Strength for every task. Strength to carry the cross.

Courage to bear the sorrow. Patience to persecution. And all that comes to me out of his fullness in Jesus Christ.

You know these words? He addeth more grace when the burdens grow greater. He sendeth the strength when the labours increase. To addeth affliction he addeth more mercy.

To multiplied trials his multiplied peace. It was the great saint Thomas Fuller who once prayed. Lord either lighten the road or strengthen my back.

And God will always do one or the other. As thy days so shall thy strength be. God never puts his army into a blundering attack against some powerful enemy.

Only to find that they are discomforted and beaten. He lays his command upon my life. And then he infuses his power in his own life within me.

And always makes my back firm enough to bear every demand he puts upon me. Say do you know what God expects from you? I'll tell you. Fancy a preacher having the audacity to tell every nunny in a congregation what God expects of them.

Oh no but I know because I know what he expects of me. Shall I tell you one word? What expects of your life? Nothing. Ready for it? Failure.

Got it? Total, absolute, complete, hopeless, out and out, failure. He's written you off and me off as an absolute work out. Any comfort to you in that? Say but God has given to you his Holy Spirit that you need never fail.

Not that you cannot fail. Not that you cannot go down. But you need never fail.

And I don't know anything which takes the tension of life as that does. That brings peace to my heart. Whatever situation I may have to face.

All through my future life I have a Saviour who is adequate for it all. But without him I'll fail every time. Once I try by my own strength to do what God intends to do in me I'll go down.

That's why so many Christians bite the nails, take tranquilizers, drink masses of coffee to try and find peace. Oh, you know, you know, I think it's... You can check on this because I'm not sure I'm speaking just off the cuff. First Chronicles chapter 4, I think about verse 23, there's a little group of people, they're descendants of... and they dwelt among hedges and plants.

Nothing much glamorous about that. They just did the hard work in an obscure place. And listen, there it says, there they dwelt with the king for his work.

It's wonderful when you dwell with the king for his work. For when you're dwelling with the king, you're dwelling in the area of all the resources that are adequate for every situation. But I tell you, if you start

dwelling with the work for the king, that's misery.

Which are you doing right now? Eh? Are you dwelling with the work for the king? And you're working like any slave for the sake of God, dear son. Friend, if you're doing that, the edge of a breakdown. You'll crack, you'll break.

You can't do it. You start dwelling with the work for the king, that's misery. Which are you doing right now? Eh? Are you with the work for the king? And you're working like any slave for the sake of God, dear son.

Friend, if you're doing that, you're on the edge of a breakdown. You'll crack, you'll break. You can't do it.

You fail. You're dwelling with the work for the king, within the limitations of all your own resources. Oh, but if you're dwelling with the king for the work, you're all right then.

Oh, hallelujah. Yes. As thy day, so shall thy strength be.

And see, as you're with the king for the work, you're constantly being filled up with all the fullness of God. And I tell you, it doesn't matter what happens and what may come to your life, there's never a bundle of affliction that can touch you. There's never a storm that can hit you.

But it's all wrapped up in a bundle of grace that's sufficient. The basin must always be full. Not merely for my enjoyment, not so that I can get into a wonderful little holiness huddle with a lot of other Christians and say, my, aren't we getting good? But for the benefit of other people.

I don't often quote from Moffat, but I want to quote from him now, for I think his rendering of verses 12 to 14 is masterly. The service rendered does more than supply the wants of the saints. It overflows with many a cry of thanks to God.

It shows what you are. It makes men praise God for the way you have come under the gospel of Christ, which you confess, and they are drawn to you and pray for you on account of the surpassing grace which God has caused to rest upon you. You see, you see, when you have all sufficiency for all things and abound in every good work, it's making you an attractive Christian.

People begin to ask, that you can, as you do, when you're really facing a crisis. There's something about your life which is so attractive, and so wonderful, and so calm. Why? People begin to say, I wonder what it is that he's got that I haven't got.

Attractiveness. You remember in John's epistle, he says, that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you. He had heard a preacher, but he had seen a light.

And when they saw Jesus, they said, we beheld his glory. The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Full of attractiveness and doctrine.

I say it to my shame, but how often as a Christian, and as a preacher, I've been full of truth, but I've been empty of grace. I've looked back upon my ministry many, many times, and I've had to say to myself, I wonder if the Lord Jesus would ever look like that. So unkindly, so censorious.

Oh, very sound, very orthodox, very correct, but devoid of attractiveness. May I say that the trouble with most of us, I'm not being unkind, but just realistic, is not that we're unorthodox, but we're unattractive. I don't mean physically.

But I mean spiritually. Most of us spend most of our time running after unconverted people who run as hard as they can away from us. You look up the Acts of the Apostles, and you will find that the first movement of evangelism following Pentateuch, the first movement, was not the church going out to the world, it was the world coming into the church.

I don't mean wilderness. When this sound was heard, the multitude came together. There was something so attractive and so dynamic and so supernatural that had taken place in the life of these disciples that they were amazed.

And they all came together. That's why God gives us grace to make us attractive. And that's, ye may abound unto every good work.

You can put it in another way if you want to. But let me just say this, that there have been terrible evils arising from the way that some evangelical preachers talk as if the end of God's dealings would ask for the sort of vague kind of salvation which was little more than a way of dodging hell. But the New Testament tells me that God's purpose is that I might be filled with His fullness.

That I may abound unto every good work. We all love Ephesians 1, 8 and 9. By grace do you say, through faith, that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

We love that. But remember that followed by verse 10 which says, We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 2, 10.

Confused in your mind the good works which can save nobody with the good works which are the inevitable result of salvation. You are created in Christ unto good works. A correct creed is intended to result in a Christ-like character.

And if it doesn't, if it doesn't, it's worthless. You may be fundamental and believe your Bible from cover to cover and yet go to hell. I remember a friend of mine, oh you know him, Major Ian Thomas.

He came to Moody Church some years ago during my pastorate there. And he preached a sermon entitled Unsaved Believers. That rocked the place to the core.

But it's true, a dreadful terrifying possibility. If, I repeat, if a correct creed doesn't lead to a Christ-like character it's invalid in New Testament experience. And the avalanche of grace that reaches us from the throne of God in Christ is supremely for the reproduction of a character which will make men see our good works and glorify God.

And salvation which doesn't issue in that is certainly not authentic. Just think, how could it possibly be that the grace of God in Christ should be in him and evil when he is truly living within them. That's fantastic.

Grace, again I repeat, makes us greater. Now this inexhaustible provision in your life must result in this inevitable practice. Oh how my heart trembles and my soul is burdened.

Even maybe for someone within the sound of my voice this morning whose life is an absolute denial of this principle. Who professes the glory in the salvation which is all of grace. Who claims to rejoice in forgiveness of sin by grace.

And yet whose life is absolutely empty of this very quality of graciousness. To claim to have received the grace of God in forgiveness and yet fail to display the grace of God in life is a total contradiction to the

New Testament. It reminds me of the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son.

And my friend, allow me to say if this graciousness was revealed in Christian lives then Christian people wouldn't be so divided as we are. We'd treat the church a little more kindly. I don't care what a man's label is.

Whether he's Episcopalian or Anglican or Presbyterian or Plymouth or Baptist or anything. Doesn't matter to me. But he may like to fish in that pond.

Well God bless him. But if that man has Christ in his heart he's my brother. And that man deserves my fellowship and I deserve his.

And that's the church. Who are all united in life in Christ and have received from the fountain of grace in God. And therefore though we may disagree at least we disagree agreeably.

And not so disagreeably that we break fellowship. I tell you if I started to preach a sermon on the subject of baptism we'd have a real old time this morning. But I wouldn't do that you see.

If you want to show down have it but on a major issue. Don't major on minor. Reveal in your heart the grace of God which may disagree with your brother in Christ and all sorts of issues.

But to heaven's sake don't go and form another independent Bible church. We need them like we need a hole in the head. Don't do it.

I tell you the history of half of them doesn't bear examination. It's a split from something else. Because you don't believe what I believe I'm going to start off my own work.

Grace doesn't allow that. Grace shows love, understanding. Grace shows the love of Christ in a man's life.

Now the only question remaining this morning that I have time to deal with is just this. If this provision that is inexhaustible leads to a practice that is ineffable how is it experienced? Only through a principle that is inescapable. And there is something in this verse which has absolutely shocked me.

Shocked me, wakened me, stabbed me. Awake. Listen.

God is able to make all grace abound toward you. It doesn't say He will. It says He's able.

And He put the whole weight of responsibility upon you and me to make His ability an operating reality in my life. God is able but He puts the responsibility on me to make it real and experienced. And there are conditions.

I may have access to the fountain of life. It may gush out from the heart of God. It may flow down by my side and pass me by.

And the reason why the breakdown why the lack of display in our life of all that heaven supplies Oh may God help you and me to ask that question and never stop asking it until I have the answer. If God is able to make all grace abound toward me that I may have all provisions in all things why, why am I still so unpleasant so hard, so censorious so critical, so unkind Why? Why is a home like they are? Why is love gone out of them? Why are they just kept together in many cases for the sake of appearance? Why? Why are we so ungrateful? Well I believe it's because we've learned about heaven's law of supply. But what

about the demand? There's a principle here and it's a principle of harvest.

And I can't escape the conclusion that verse 6 is intimately related to verse 8. As I sow so shall I reap. Galatians 6.8 If I sow to the flesh I shall reap corruption. That doesn't mean I'm necessarily immoral.

But I sow to myself. If I feed the old nature I'll get the consequences. Putting it very crudely and very simply very practically If I haven't learned P.V. knob control I'll reap the consequences.

I'll prefer the ball game to the prayer meeting. I'll prefer the TV show to witnessing the Christ. I sow to myself of course I'll reap corruption.

If I prefer the novel pardon me suggesting it but the novel with just the shade of doubtful in it just the shade of the doubtful if I prefer that to my Bible I'll reap the consequence. If I sow to the flesh I'll reap corruption. If I sow to the spirit I'll reap life everlasting.

And if I want God's supply of grace which never runs out then I must show God that I'm in business. That I must show him that I must care that I care. I must sow and sow and sow.

I said to the people who responded last night to the invitation and who remain to this after meeting there isn't any short cut to holiness. There isn't any instant method. How sparingly we sow in the spirit.

How praise how little we meditate upon the words. Examine this morning your sowing. Years ago more years than I care to remember I used to play rugby football very actively.

And I was a candidate for the English team. And it was my life's ambition at the time to play for England in football. So do you know what I did? I got up every morning at five o'clock I didn't know there was such a time till then.

I got up every morning at five and I ran round the suburb of North West London for an hour ten miles. Hard. Then I went to my business.

I was with a firm in London as a chartered accountant and I went down to town. And after business at night I went to a running track. And I ran a further ten miles.

And then I had half an hour skipping. And then I came to my apartment I wasn't married at the time and I put on rugby clothes. Now perhaps I don't need to tell you this in Canada but in English rugby you haven't any armoured plating.

It's simply a sweater and shorts. And I put on my football clothes and I went to one corner of the brick wall of my apartment and I pushed with my shoulder against that brick wall. Pushed and pushed and pushed as hard as I could.

And I went to another corner and pushed with this shoulder. Hard. All that went on for perhaps an hour.

Nobody saw me except my landlady and she thought I was nuts. It didn't matter to me what she thought. You see I was determined when I turned out on Saturday afternoon to play a game on a football field before about 20,000 people I was determined I was to be 100% in.

And if anybody hit me and tackled me my, they wouldn't want to do it again. They'd hit two shoulders like concrete. And they did.

You know, I never ceased to thank the Lord for those days of training because they've stood me in tremendous stead physically ever since. You have to care for your body. You know what Paul said about it? And you, of what he said? I'm using, I'm using Philips translation of the last bit of 1 Corinthians 9 when he said I am no shadow boxer.

I do not beat the air. I buffet my body and I did it blow upon blow lest having been preaching and pretending the rules to other people, I should be disqualified. He didn't fear that he would lose his soul but he did fear that he would be put on and God could go on.

Oh, what a terrible thing that is for a man to have been used but to be out of the battle. How many people stop living years before they die? You know, stop caring, stop doing anything. Retire and go to Florida.

Finished. Out with everything. My friends, listen.

If you want to know the grace of God sufficient then you've got to discipline your life and you seek the faith of God and you pray and you buffet your body and by the power of the Spirit you keep it in subjection. I shall be speaking more on that subject tomorrow. But I'm telling you examine your sowing.

If I was prepared to do that, which I never did, to try and win fame at Rugger how much am I prepared to do for Jesus? There's nothing more easy in the work of God than to lose the word of God. Busy and bound to substitute word for worship orthodoxy for obedience. Being so proud to be the fundamentalist but you're demanding from a congregation or from a people obedience far bigger than you're prepared to give yourself.

Examine your sowing. He is able to make all grace abound but I've got to sow. My friend, do you ever knock and knock at the door of heaven till God has met your need? God's supply is there but He's never heard your demand.

I was reading this morning in my quiet time that lovely verse, that lovely psalm Psalm 130 the 6th verse of which says My soul waiteth for thee more than they the morning yea, more than they that wait for the morning and I thought yes. Do you ever have a sleepless night? A night where you can't sleep and you toss and you turn and you stand up and you sit down and you get up and you turn the pillow round the other way and you shift the clothes over you and you turn this way and that way then you look out the window and it's still dark and you say yes, oh when's the morning going to come? Is this night ever going to end? Perhaps you never have nights like that. Well, I do.

And you long for the morning Oh if only this night was ending My soul waiteth for thee more than they that wait for the morning yea Does God hear you demand? Does he hear you ask and ask and ask and go on asking and show him that you mean business you shall they shall seek me and find me when they seek me with all their heart Oh he is able but his supply depends upon my demand Now just one last thing that I'll take two minutes to say and then I'm through and you're saying to me some of you this morning I agree with you, I know what you mean but frankly preacher I've lost all desire to sow I've lost an abstract of the word I've no heart concern for others I I just don't like going to prayer I just want don't want my bible anymore and I've lost all desire for it.

I maintain my scripture union portion each day and read it two verses and then I pick it up and that's all and I've found my heart has turned barren and my spirit has tore and I tell you if I'm honest with you you're saying to me if I'm honest I've got a chip on my shoulder today I'm serving the Lord with a chip on my

shoulder terribly difficult to stay in the job he's given me the work he's given me I've just turned sour can God do anything with a life like that I tell you he can and this just gives me more hope than ever as I see in verse 10 that God goes one step further the extra mile so to speak he that ministers seed to the sower when I don't want to sow when I've lost my taste for the word when somehow my bible has dried up and I've turned sour what can God do for me I'll tell you he ministers and that seed is Christ he knows my heart he knows our barrenness he knows our sourness and so he puts into my heart seed life which will produce longing desire appetite for his word and for himself I tell you there's no one nearer the Lord today no one nearer being blessed no one nearer the heart of God than the man who's turned sour and barren and his heart is cold knows he isn't right and he can't get himself right well except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die to bite the load but if it dies it bringeth forth much fruit he gives himself continually as the seed in my heart which will recreate me the hunger for God how wonderful is the grace of Jesus and if you are facing the preacher or facing the Lord more than that looking to him with a sour barren cold heart don't try and pretend that it's not and don't try and alter it but come to him and tell him all about it and he'll minister seed and he'll create in you the longing for himself as the psalmist David said my bones waxed old through my roaring day and night thy hand was heavy upon me my moisture was turned to the drought when he tried to hide from God when he tried to hide his sin tried to camouflage it when I kept silent my bones waxed old through my roaring dryness barren ah but then when he spoke when he met God when he assessed it it came to God as he was how wonderfully he was able to say that God restores and heals and forgives and cleanses and he can do that first day because his grace knows no measure let's pray

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