

Prayer Sighs

by A.W. Pink

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual sighs and groanings as evidence of spiritual life, the pantings of holiness, and the marks of the Christian's union with Christ.

Scripture: 2 Kings 3:19, Psalm 14:3, Psalm 53:1, Ecclesiastes 7:20, Isaiah 64:6, Jeremiah 11:16, Matthew 25:30, Luke 17:10, Romans 3:12, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Human Depravity", "Total Corruption"

Description

Greek Word Studies for an aid_number 36031 preaches on the concept of becoming useless, as described by the Greek word 'achreioo', meaning to make unprofitable or morally corrupt. This word paints a picture of rotten fruit, symbolizing something irreversibly bad and worthless. The preacher emphasizes that without Christ, human nature is soured and useless, akin to milk gone sour. The sermon delves into various Bible verses that highlight the depravity and corruption of man apart from God, emphasizing the inability of humanity to do good on their own.

Transcript

The exercises of soul and pangs of heart find expression in sighs and sobs, in moans and groans, yet such as mere nature never produced. The word "sigh" has a much stronger force in its Scriptural usage than in our ordinary conversation, or we should say, in more modern speech, for three hundred years ago it signified a lament rather than a mark of peevishness. "And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage" (Ex. 2:23), the meaning of which is explained in the next verse: "And God heard their groaning." Their "sighing" expressed their suffering and sorrow under the oppression of their Egyptian taskmasters. So again, we read that the sorely afflicted Job declared "For my sighing cometh before my meat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters" (Job 3:24). So by prayer sighs we intend those agitations and breathings of soul which are virtually synonymous with groans.

A "sigh" is an inarticulate declaration, and indistinct cry for deliverance. The saints are sometimes so opposed and troubled that they cannot find language suited to their emotions: where words fail them, the thoughts and feelings of their hearts find expression in sighs and cries. The workings of a Christian's heart under the pressure of indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, the opposition of the ungodly, the burden of uncongenial society, the wickedness of the world, the low state of the Cause of Christ on earth, are variously described in Scripture. Sometimes he is said to be "in heaviness" (1 Pet. 1:6), to "cry out of the depths" (Psa. 130:1), to "roar" (Psa. 38:8), to be "overwhelmed" (Psa. 61:2), to be "distracted" (Psa.

88:13). The tossings and anguish of his soul are depicted as "groanings" (Rom. 8:23). The groanings of the believer are not only expressive of sorrow, but also of hope, of the intensity of his spiritual desires, of his panting after God, and his yearning for the bliss which awaits him on high (2 Cor. 5:2,4). Such exercises of soul are peculiar to the regenerate, and by them the Christian may identify himself. If the reader now be the subject of sorrows and sighs to which he was a total stranger while in a state of nature, then he may be assured he is no longer dead in sins. If he finds himself groaning over the infection of his heart and those workings of inward corruption which prevent his perfectly loving and uninterruptedly serving God as he longs to do, that is proof that a principle of holiness has been communicated to his soul. If he mourns over the lustings of his flesh against that principle of holiness, then he must be alive unto God.

The worldling will groan over the common troubles of life, such as financial loss, pain of body, the death of a loved one, but that is only the voice of nature. But the worldling never weeps in secret over the coldness of his heart or the workings of unbelief. "Groans" or "sighs" are the evidences of spiritual life, the pantings of holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. They are, as Mr. Winslow expressed it, "The ruled chimings of Heaven." They are the sure pledges of deliverance (2 Cor. 5:4). They are the marks of the Christian's union with Him who was "The Man of Sorrows." Before Christ healed the deaf man, we read that "He sighed" (Mark 7:34), which expressed His deep sympathy with the sufferer, as one "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And again, when the Pharisees came to Him, "tempting Him" by asking a sign from heaven, we are told that Christ "sighed deeply in His spirit" (Mark 8:11,12), which denoted His holy indignation at their sin, godly sorrow for their persons, and grief within His own soul, for He "suffered" when He was "tempted" (Heb. 2:18). His holiness felt contact with evil. "The nearer anyone is to heaven, the more he desires to be there. Because Christ is there. For the more frequent and steady are our views of Him by faith, the more do we long and groan for the removal of all obstructions and hindrances. Groaning is a vehement desire, mixed with sorrow, for the present want of what is desired" (John Owen).

Now the spiritual sighs and groanings of the Christian are interpreted by God as prayers! Those sacrifices which are acceptable to Him are "a broken and a contrite heart" (Psa. 51:7). Sobblings of soul are of great price in His sight (Psa. 61:8). The believer's moans are intelligible language to heaven: "the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping" (Psa. 6:8): that "weeping" possesses an appeal unto Him which the eloquence of professional praying does not. "Lord, all my desire is before Thee, and my groaning is not hid from Thee" (Psa. 38:9).

Our tears speak to Him of godly sorrow, our moans as the breathings of a contrite spirit. "From heaven did the Lord behold the earth: to hear the groaning of the prisoner" (Psa. 102:20). Here then is consolation: God is privy to our secret sighs, Christ is touched with them (Heb. 4:15), they ascend as petitions to heaven, and are the sure pledges of deliverance.

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