

II Corinthians 9:9-11

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of desire in the spiritual life, highlighting its role in igniting spiritual growth, illuminating the mind, and enabling us to enjoy God's presence.

Duration: 42:35

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 7:9

Topics: "Giving", "Desire for God", "Repentance"

Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the significance of desire in the Christian life, drawing from Paul's message in 2 Corinthians 7:9-11. He explains that godly sorrow leads to true repentance and a fervent desire for God, which is essential for spiritual vitality. Tozer warns against the dangers of a lack of desire, which can render one's faith lifeless, and encourages believers to cultivate a passionate longing for God. He illustrates that true desire can illuminate understanding and transform one's relationship with God, leading to a deeper spiritual experience. Ultimately, Tozer calls for self-examination and repentance to rekindle that fervent desire for God.

Transcript

In the book of 2 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians the 7th chapter, verses 9 to 11, Paul writing to the Corinthian church says, though, I'll read verse 8, for though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent. He'd written him a severe letter reprimanding them, and he felt bad about it, but he said, I didn't really repent, though I did repent, meaning I hated to do it, and I was sorry in a way to do it, but I'm glad I did it, for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that you sorrowed to repentance, for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death, for behold this selfsame thing, that you sorrowed after a godly sort. What carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vim and desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge. In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Now, they had been guilty of wrongdoing in the Church. He wrote them, threatening to turn some of them over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh. He didn't spare any words, and thank God they didn't spare any repentance.

And their repentance was like a thunderstorm, it cleared the air, swept away the humidity, and brightened everything. He said, it wrought in you indignation, not against each other, but against themselves and against the devil, and fear, godly fear, vim and desire, zeal, and revenge, determined that all they'd lost by their sin they'd get back again from the devil. Now what I want to talk about tonight, I want to select this little section here, yea, what vim and desire.

And I want to talk about the importance of desire in the spiritual life. The importance of desire, vim and desire. Let's pray a moment before I preach.

Now dear Lord, thou knowest how much we need a clearing of ourselves, how muggy things are in our spiritual lives, how overcast. We need a thunder and lightning storm, and a wind, a great rushing wind, and a driving rain upon our souls. Oh God, we don't deserve it, but we need it.

Help us, we pray, to meet the conditions that it may come. Bless tonight, definitely, these remaining moments. Oh thou Christ in the glory, high and lifted up, assert thy authority to thy church.

We are a segment of thy church. We belong to thee. We beseech thee, O thou who walkest in the midst of the golden candlesticks, priest, high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, use that sword if you need to, use thy brazen feet if it's necessary, but deliver us, we beseech thee, from all the things that would hinder us from making progress in the Christian life.

We ask it in the holy name of Jesus, amen. Now a vital ingredient in the Christian life is desire. Now it is not the only ingredient, but it is one of those which, if it is missing, everything else lies dormant.

It has to be there in order for anything else to have any, to operate or act. Now, it's found interwoven, of course, in the experience of the Saints. It has other names, hunger is one of them, thirst is one of them, covet is another one Paul uses, long for, yearn.

And here, the word vehement here added to desire, gives it fire. That's a fiery word, means fervent, fiery, ardent, to the point of heat. And without this, religion is a frozen corpse.

Without this, evangelical Christianity is a frozen corpse. If we are not animated by the soul of fervent desire, then we have the corpse of Christianity. Now, to turn it around, the absence of it, and there'll be some overlapping, I'm sure, in some of the things I say, and it's unavoidable, and the repeating is to be desired, not to be apologized for.

The effect of the absence of this desire in our Christian lives, I've asked before and I ask it now, and I want you to probe a little with me, why is there so much light and so little delight? Why do we have so much light, and yet the Christians are so little joyous? And why does the truth we know produce so little fruit, the want of desire? Why do we read the scriptures and get so little out of them, want of desire? Why do we pray with so little enjoyment? Most of our prayers are dutiful prayers. We hurry through them to get at something else that we want to do, praying being something we have to do. And why do we ask for so much and get so little, the want of desire? Why do good books that we read profit us so little? I believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God, sitting at God's right hand, victorious.

Otherwise, I'd be a very discouraged man, for I have a feeling that a lot of people are missing some tremendously apocryphal opportunities. Now, our trouble is the want of ardency, the want of ardor, the lack of vehement desire. One of the old men of God, you know, I've told you that I'd be talking a lot about the old men of God in other days.

From The Cloud of Unknowing and other books from night to night, I have nothing tonight from The Cloud of Unknowing, but I have something here from a man who lived a hundred years ago, or 150, and here's what he says. I want you to hear this. He says, "...the lack of desire is the ill of all ills.

Many thousands through it the dark pathway have trod. But the unction, the balm of predestined souls, is a jubilant pining and longing for God." I envy the precision of such men as this, just from a technical standpoint. Who could have said anything better than this? "...a jubilant pining and longing for God." As an editor now for 10 years and a writer for 30, I necessarily, as every barber sees their haircuts and dentists see their teeth, I see everything when I look at it, if it's in print.

And the man who wrote this, he wasn't fooling around with words. He said the unction, the balm, the A.L.M. balm of predestined souls, and he didn't hesitate to get out into the forbidden wilderness of predestination. He said, how do you know you're predestinated? Well, he said, I can tell by the unction and the balm that's on you.

You come out smelling of the unction and the balm, I know you've got it. And he said, what is that? Why, it's a jubilant pining and longing for God. Now, a pining and longing for God that was gloomy and sulky, or a pining for God that was, and longing that was discouraged and sour, might make a very gloomy Christian.

But he says there's a jubilation in our longing after God, just as a mother who was shut away from her baby for a long time, wants the baby, wants to get back home, and wants it so bad, but she's jubilant with it, because she's expecting to be back. And while she may well wipe a tear from her eye, she smiles while she's doing it and apologizes, she's jubilant while she's longing and pining to get back home. So this predestined soul, he's jubilant and pining while he's longing for God.

He says it is a great gift of God to live after our Lord, that is, it's a great gift of God to live now, instead of in the old times before Jesus was born on earth, it is a great gift of God to live after our Lord. Yet the old Hebrew times, they were ages of fire, when fainting souls fed on each dim-figured word and God called men he loved most the men of desire. Remember that in the Old Testament? The men of desire, God said they're men of desire.

Do you know what? Whenever God can find a man of desire, he hands him the key. He just says, don't bother asking me, just come and get it. Here it is.

He just gives him the key. Whenever he can find a man of desire. But the trouble is the lack of desire.

God called men he loved most the men of desire, and those fainting souls fed on each dim-figured word. I'm quoting from Faber, incidentally. The fainting souls, old Old Testament brethren, they didn't have the New Testament, they didn't have all that you and I have, but every dim-figured word was to them riches and fruit, and they fed on it.

And then he exhorts us, he says, yes, pine for thy God, fainting soul, ever pine, O languish mid all that life brings thee of mirth, famished, thirsty, and restless, let such life be thine for what sight is to heaven, desire is to earth. In heaven you'll see God, on earth you desire God, and what the sight of God is in heaven, the desire for God is on earth. That is, it's the beginning of it, the start of it, this desire for God that is so radiant that it prefigures the very sight of God when we see him in heaven.

Now, the state of our desires, of course, varies. It varies from none at all to a little, and to very strong desire. And as our desire varies, so also our spiritual condition varies.

There is some people, they have no desire at all. Such preaching as I'm doing here wouldn't mean a thing to them in the wide world. I preached in a certain church over in New York City, and somebody there said, oh, he preaches over our heads, we don't know what he's talking about.

Now, it wasn't that my English wasn't understood, it wasn't that I used long phrases that I didn't explain, I never do that. When I use a technical theological expression, I always assume there's a ten-year-old boy present who doesn't know what it means, and I stop and define it. And then the ten-year-old boy will know what I'm talking about.

So if anybody doesn't understand me, it's not because I'm soaring around up their two heights, because their desire won't let them. Have you ever been present when somebody brought up something in which you simply weren't interested? Somebody delivers a lecture at the PTA on the care of pink tulips. Well, you couldn't be less interested, and you don't understand what the woman's talking about.

She talks about the bulbs and all, you don't know. You know what she says, you could define and parse every word. You know whether she's grammatical or not, and she's got to be at the PTA.

But we're just not interested. I can think of a thousand things, cameras for instance. I don't own a camera, my wife has one, uses occasionally, but I don't own one.

I haven't owned one since I was in my teens. I'm not interested in cameras at all. And when I get with shutterbugs, and they begin to talk about cameras, I couldn't be more bored, so I don't know what they're talking about at all.

I don't know what they mean. And it isn't that I'm unintelligent, that is more than average, and it isn't that I don't know the words they use, but the boredom prevents anything they say from getting home to me. Now, I think that's one reason for some people just not being interested in not understanding what I'm talking about.

Not that it's difficult, nor profound, nor even lofty, but because they're just not in the mood for it. They're not interested. They don't want to hear it because it doesn't interest them.

You can't learn what you're not interested in. To learn anything, you must be interested in it. Now, then there's that second, that's no interest at all.

And then the second is a little interest, but less interest in God than in something else. And that's what I grieve about, and I notice some of it here. I think you're the nicest people in the world.

I've never preached to any people that I like personally as much as I do to the people of Avenue Road, and I'll say that to you frankly. But I do notice that there's a good deal of this about you, that you're interested in God, but not sufficiently interested to make it work. You're interested only to a degree, and you're interested more in something else.

Some of you are. Now, certainly that's not true of all, but that's what's holding us back. And we get what we desire most, you know.

We get what we desire most. If you desire a thing enough, you'll get it, particularly in the kingdom of God where everything comes by grace and where everything's promised to us, we'll have it if we want it. Badly enough.

An example might be a woman who wants God. She might come down to the front and talk to Pastor Noll with tears in her eyes. A day after tomorrow, she may marry some tramp who isn't worth wiping her feet on.

She wanted God, but she wanted that man worse, and she got the man, and she stuck with him. I haven't any body in mind, but I know it's happened God knows how many times it's happened. We want God, but we want something worse, and we think that because we want God we're very religious.

I smile, and I admit I smile rather sorrowfully, when I hear of certain people, he's a very religious man, they say. And they mean by that that he stops once in a while in his show and sings a hymn, or he goes to church once in between some evils that he's doing. On his way to the horse race, why, he'll chat a moment about what the rector said Sunday morning.

A very religious man, indeed. He wants God, but he wants something else worse, and he gets what he wants. That's a little desire, but less than for something else.

I pray that the great God Almighty will reveal to each one of you what you want worse than this world. And if it isn't God, you will sorrow with a sorrow not to be repented of. And then there's a third, which is a desire stronger than any other emotion in the heart.

A desire for God stronger than anything else in the heart. Desire for God. You know, you don't have to know so much about theology if your thirst for God is strong enough.

One of the great preachers of the last generation was Paul Rader. Some of you older people may have heard of him. He said at one time, talking about this very thing, about a desire after God, he said a man was shipwrecked and washed ashore on an island.

And along with him there was washed ashore some cans of food. And the ship went down and everybody else perished, and he was all by himself on the island. Now this, of course, is a hypothetical case.

This didn't happen to anybody. It might have, but it's hypothetical as he told it and as I tell it. And there's no food there, just sand and one palm tree, a seagull and a turtle or two.

And the turtles get away. No food there except that can of food, those cans of food. But there's no can opener.

And the great preacher smiled and said, Do you think that he wouldn't get in that side of that can somehow? He said, You just give a hungry man a can of something and he'll get inside that can and he'll get what's in it, even if he doesn't have a homemade gadget or a machine-made gadget to get to it. Now he didn't tell how he'd get it, and I've been thinking ever since it'd be tough. But if he was hungry enough, he'd make it.

He'd pick up a pebble and by continuous, a half a day use of that pebble, he'd wear the tin away and get inside the can and get out the salmon or the beans or whatever it might be. Now a lot of people have a great deal of theology, but they haven't enough desire. And other people don't have much theology, but

their desire blazes.

And so they get, without having much, they get a great deal. God judges us according to our desire after him, hungering and thirsting after him. And not after how well we can answer the questions on what is justification by faith and where is it found in the scriptures.

Very good, very good, very good. A lot of people can answer that that haven't been justified. Well, now our spiritual state perfectly corresponds with the intensity of our desire.

Man can be very religious all his life and not desire God enough ever to receive him or ever get to know him at all. Each one enjoys as close fellowship with God as he desires and has as much of God as he desires. Now that's the part that overlaps.

I mentioned that once several weeks ago, but I repeat it and may repeat it again because it's very important in spiritual theology. You know there are two kinds of theology. There's systematic theology and spiritual theology.

There's a theology systematized. And then there's a theology lived and enjoyed. It was Gypsy Smith, I think, that said he hated theology, but he loved the Bible.

He hated botany, but he just loved flowers. The person who, when they look at a flower, sees nothing but stamens and petals and what family it belongs to, I often think of that farmer boy out here somewhere in Ontario. I think I heard this in Pennsylvania, but it'll do here, that some botanist, one of these old fellows with a goatee and a spyglass, he was stopping by the road and he was looking at a little plant and said to the boy, what family does this belong to? And the boy said, it's Joan's family up here two miles.

And that's it. He wasn't interested in the beauty of the flower and he wasn't interested in the fragrance of the flower. He wanted to know what Latin category it came under.

Ah yes, my brethren, I've met those, I've met people who always had to know what the Greek was and where we could find supporting scriptures for our dogmatic assertion. And I've met people that wanted God so bad that it just ran out of their eyes in happy tears. They were the ones that got God.

Now the effect of strong desire, vehement desire, it's almost incredible, brother, what desire will do if you get it strongly enough in the kingdom of God. It's wonderful and illuminating. I don't use the word magic, but it's almost a kind of magic, what the effect of strong desire is and what strong desire will do.

It illuminates the mind. Have you ever had this experience that you studied your Bible from the time that you list God is love in the beginner's class in Sunday school? You went on up through and got your Bible when you graduated from certain departments, went into another department and got a New Testament in the other department, went right on up through and learned a lot, learned the books of the Bible and memorized great sections of Scripture, but the thing never meant anything to you at all. And then sometime, under extreme pressure from God, you repented, believed the Scripture and got right, and suddenly the Bible fell apart like an orange with the skin off.

It just came into sections and the whole thing was there before you. You knew what all that meant, that you'd memorized and learned, thank God you learned it, because it couldn't have been there if you hadn't learned it. But it suddenly all came alive, like looking over a landscape from a high hill in the darkness, and then the sun comes up and suddenly everything blazes with light.

And then the means of grace begin to mean something when there's a vehement desire. I've grieved for years over our communion services. People sit, are bored, chat, look far away, dreaming, while communion is being served.

Means of grace means very little, but it means a tremendous amount when the desire is there. And then faith becomes active, it's like a medicine. It's like something you take and it suddenly becomes active within you.

And God's presence is enjoyed. And a deep sense of well-being fills the soul. And it may go on to a place of strong delight.

Now if we don't have this, what shall we do about it? You know, some of us imagine that we have gone on and we know so much in our day. But I want to read now a little bit, and I'll explain as I go along so that it won't be a long, worrisome quotation. You and I had a little word about that long quotation deal.

Well now, a man lived one time by the name of Richard Rohl. I don't know whether you ever heard of him, he was an Englishman. And he was a monk, and he was born 700 years ago, and I assume he lived 700 years ago.

And he entered a monastery because his heart was hungry for God. But he got so blessed there, I don't know how he did it, but he got so blessed there, from reading the scriptures and praying, that he couldn't stay in that musty place any longer. So he got a guitar, and he traveled all over England.

And he described his Christianity, the grace of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ. He said, it is the religion of heat, sweetness, and song. It's hot, it's sweet, and it's musical.

He said, that's Christianity, that's the real Christianity when you get a hold of it. It's the religion of heat, sweetness, and song. And he went everywhere preaching all over England.

And he thanked God for men like that, even though they were over on the other side, they did do, men like that did something. Now he made a prayer, and I got a copy of the prayer. A man wanted a copy of the prayer I read last week.

That one made by the old cloud of unknowing, God unto whom all hearts be open. I copied it, but the man isn't here, and he comes, I'll give it to him. Now here's another prayer.

And I want you to measure this prayer up alongside yours and mine. And then see why he is celebrated for 700 years, and we'll be forgotten before the last clod falls down on our coffin. Or at least we'll be forgotten religiously.

People will remember, they'll be probating the will. And we'll be seeing if there's anything worth salvaging from our old clothes. But as far as the things of God are concerned, a lot of us will be forgotten just as when we breathe our last breath.

We'll be forgotten by everybody but God. The reason being that we all but forgot God. Well he made this prayer.

He said, Oh everlasting love. Now that was God the Father he was praying to there. Oh everlasting love, inflame my soul with the love of God, so that nothing save his embraces may set my heart on fire.

Our trouble is our hearts get set on fire with such trifling things. But this man said, Oh God so inflame my soul that nothing can set my heart on fire but the embraces of God my Father. He didn't want to be a sucker for every new thing that comes along.

Didn't want to. He said this then. As he prayed, pour out thyself into the depths of my soul.

Enter my heart and fill it with thy sweetness. Refresh my mind with a strong wine of thy love. That forgetting all evil and having only thee I may be glad and rejoice in Jesus my God.

That was his prayer. That was part of his prayer. Enter my heart he said.

Inflame it. Refresh my mind. And so that I can forget all evil and have only thee.

I have said again our trouble is we have too much and want more. And the result is we don't get God because our minds are set on other things. And we're trying the impossible job of having God and everything else too.

And the modern Christian philosophy is that we can have God and everything else. And Christianity is equated with fun. Then he prayed on.

Oh Holy Ghost. Enter into me and draw me to thyself. Transform the gift that thou hast given me by grace that my heart filled with thy joy may despise the things of the world.

Could you pray that prayer and would you pray that prayer? Say that as an old monk. Oh brother I'd give him my, I don't know, Richmond or something. Right now and take his robe if I thought I could get the heart of man.

Now heart. Oh Holy Ghost. Enter into me and draw me to thyself and transform me and fill me with thy joy that I may despise the things of the world.

I don't mind how man dresses. I'd preach the gospel with two bathrobes and nine chains around my neck if I thought the Holy Ghost would be any more powerful than in me. I don't care how you dress.

May she receive he says about his soul spiritual gifts from thee the giver entering by my happiness unspeakable might be all consumed of holy love. Now this was a man longing to be consumed by holy love. He wanted to be burnt up with holy love.

Then he says burn up my inward parts oh God and all my heart with a fire that burns forever on thine altar. Imagine this. We say we're full gospel.

We're land people. We know the fourfold gospel and we're cold as fish compared with this. Cold as fish.

That's why we're where we are. We haven't got vehement desire. Come I pray thee says thou sweet and true joy.

Come most sweet and most desired. Come my love who art my only comfort. Enter a soul that longs for thee.

Inflame with thy divine fire all my heart. Enlighten my inmost parts with thy radiant light. Feed me with thy love.

Now that was a prayer. He never thought anybody would see that I suppose. But he wrote it.

Wrote that to God. Wrote it down and prayed it. Oh what wooing this is.

What a wooer he was. What a lovmaker he was. How his heart longed for God.

Such words as radiant and inflame and enlighten and love and burn and fire and consume and all such words. They burned in the man's life and heart in prayer. We want a deeper life given to us as we take one a day vitamin pills.

Take them painlessly with a glass of water and then hope they'll go to work and we can go about our business. This man paid a price for the fire and sweetness and radiance and music that burned in his heart. It was a beautiful price but he paid it.

And said help me to get rid of sin and help me to get free from all the things in the world and despise them. Do I sound like a monk? My daughter-in-law Jean says father you're a paradox. A monk with seven children.

But I'm no monk at all. I'm not even a good Christian. But I want to be.

And I want you to be. And I'm ashamed that we let a man like this outstrip us and bring fire from off the altar when we have but ashes. To live and to die and be forgotten is one thing.

But to live and to die and be remembered in the grateful hearts of adoring saints is something else. And Richard Rohl is. And I could name them by the scores.

And they all had the one thing, they had the vehement desire, a longing after God. I say what shall we do about it if we don't have it? Well what did they do in the text? They didn't have it in the text because they were not right with God. They weren't right with God.

Things had gone wrong in their church. First Corinthians tells you what. Let's look at it a little bit.

In the third chapter they were carnal and had to be fed on milk. And they hadn't grown and they were arguing with each other. In the fourth chapter they were rather sticking out an impotent chin at the apostle.

In the fifth chapter they had this gruesome and grotesque situation. That a man had married his stepmother. And he was a member of the church and had come up and take communion.

In the sixth chapter we have the people of the Lord going to law courts. And fighting before the law in order to get property. In the seventh chapter we have the domestic lives of the people all mixed up.

And Paul tried to straighten it out there. The eighth chapter, the ninth chapter, the tenth chapter and on and on. And the eleventh chapter incidentally was wrong communion.

Taking communion the wrong way. The twelfth chapter was getting all babied up about gifts. They wanted the gifts they could shake like a rattle.

So we go on almost every chapter has something in it. Showing how bad the church was off. And he wrote them a stiff letter, First Corinthians.

It was a stiff rebuke and exhortation and pleading they'd get right with God. And you know they did? They did. He said, I'm so glad.

I rejoice now. I rejoice that you were made sorry for a godly sorrow work of repentance. And behold, you sorrowed after a godly sorrow and what vim and desire it brought to your hearts.

I think that's our trouble. We have people in Chicago that don't believe in repentance at all. They say repentance is for the Jews.

Oh, it's got a kind of a sour bit of amusement out of that. When you don't want something, give it to Israel. You know, when you don't want it, give it to the Jew.

God help us. Repentance is for the children of God. Jesus our Lord said in the book of Revelation, Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent.

He wasn't talking to Israel either. He was talking to a church and named it. And if we haven't this vehement longing after God, then consider it a proof of deep soul sickness.

You got up in the morning and weren't hungry? You'd consider something wrong. I ate dinner with a missionary, breakfast with a missionary, and I'd just been eating a normal breakfast diet and I hadn't noticed anything. So he got to talking about me and about my future and what I ought to do.

He wanted me to come to the foreign field and so on. He said, you got years ahead of you yet. He said, I can tell that.

He said, you got a good appetite. I do. When I get up in the morning, I don't have to be urged.

I can eat. You know, I'm not a glutton, I hope. But I can eat.

And if I got up some morning and couldn't go near the table and get up the next morning and had no appetite, and the next had no appetite, I'd at least begin to wonder what was happening. He gave me a Billy Hill kid for some years just on the grounds that I had an appetite. And the Christian that had an appetite, he'll go someplace.

I never am so concerned to stay and get a young fella straightened out as I am and get him aimed right way. If he aimed the right way, he'll get there. I don't, you know, you'd have to answer all his questions and give him the teething ring.

I don't like that kind of thing. But get him aimed right and then get behind him, he'll make it all right. Well, consider, please, that this lack of vehement desire is keeping you weak and helpless in this hour of the world's death struggle when your great opportunity is yours now but you can't shake yourself loose.

Ah, said Paul, what a clearing of yourself this repentance brings. What a, what, ah, what carefulness and what, ah, what indignation. What indignation.

I wish some of you would get so indignant with yourselves that you'd go before God and say, Oh, God, I repudiate myself. I've held myself back, God. And what revenge, he said, and what zeal.

All had it here. Thunderstorm had come and cleared the air and the wind had driven out the fog and the mugginess and a swift rain had fallen and washed out the streets and greened up the lawns. That's what

we need.

And the God of Paul's day is the God of our day. Nothing has changed. Consider nothing important except what I'm talking about.

Consider nothing important except what the Holy Ghost says here in the book. If anything else is important, go ahead. But a year from now, you'll be where you are now and two years from now, you'll be where you are a year from now.

Oh, what ardent desire, what thirst, what burning was in the hearts of these holy men. And search for the cause. I close with that.

Now search for the cause. If you haven't a vehement desire after God, you can't say with the man of God who prayed the hymn, Oh, Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord, forgive me if I say for very love thy precious name a thousand times a day. If you don't have anything like that in your heart, search for the trouble.

You know what a doctor does when you go? You complain of pains. That's all we can tell him. Doctor, it hurts here.

That's all we ever know to say. It hurts. Well, then he begins to probe to find out why it hurts.

That's his business. Now, when something's wrong, probe a little. Don't spare yourself.

Probe a little. Don't lean upon yesterday. Probe a little today.

And say, God, why is it that my heart's so cold? Why is it that I don't feel when I sing burn, burn, oh, love within my heart, burn fiercely night and day, I don't feel anything. What's the matter with me? Probe, and the Lord will show you. He'll show you what your trouble is.

Then when you find out what your trouble is, do what the Corinthian church did. Sorrow after a godly sorrow. Straighten it out.

Clear yourself. What a clearing of yourself you did, he said. Clear yourself.

And you may be sure that the Lord will take you by the hand and start up the mountain. Amen. Let's pray.

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