

Living for What God Wills

by J. Glyn Owen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living for the will of God and overcoming sin through the power of Christ's suffering and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 53:17

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:1

Topics: "Will Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the first two verses of 1 Peter chapter 4. He emphasizes the importance of having the same attitude as Christ, who suffered in his body. The preacher highlights that those who have responded to the call of Christ and become Christians are transformed by the gospel. They no longer live for their own desires but for the will of God. The sermon also mentions the contrast between the dark and selfish mindset of the world and the moral focus that comes with accepting God's grace.

Transcript

You kindly turned with me this evening for a little while to the passage that was read for us by Mr. Lowe from the first epistle written by Peter in chapter 4 and we are going to look, God helping us, at the first two verses in that very full chapter. Let us read therefore verses 1 and 2 in 1 Peter chapter 4. Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

And I would particularly wish to underline that closing statement. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God, living for what God wills. Those who have heard the call of Christ in and through the heralds of the gospel and who have truly responded in repentance and in faith have thereby been transformed.

This is a basic tenet of our Christian faith. In becoming Christians, we do not simply receive some tenet of belief that we arrange alongside other tenets in our minds. We do that, but we do more, or rather something more is done for us and to us and within us.

The gospel tenets being received are, as we have heard from the parables recently, the gospel tenets, the gospel truths are like planting a seed in the soil of the heart, and that seed in and of itself brings forth fruit

in our lives, in our natures, in ourselves. And thereafter, we can never be quite the same. If any man be in Christ, says Paul, there is a new creation.

Something altogether significant has happened. You will notice that in the language of Peter here, such people have not only passed through from death to life, but are henceforth ensphered in Christ, just as Noah was ensphered in the ark as he passed through the flood. If you and I are believers, we are in Christ as surely as Noah and his family were in the ark.

And we not only pass through the flood, but we come to another world in him who is our Savior. Now such believers, to refer back to verse 18 in chapter 3, such believers are, let us underscore, being brought to God. There's a very key little statement there in verse 13 of chapter 3, and we need to take it seriously.

What is happening as God saves men and women from their sins is this. He is bringing us to himself. A salvation that does not bring us to God in the here and now, in fellowship, in obedience, in worship, in service, and ultimately into his immediate presence, a salvation which does not bring us thus to God is no salvation.

We may claim the most remarkable psychological experiences, unless they bring us to God into fellowship with him now, into a knowledge of him now that begins and will consummate in eternity, then it is hardly the kind of salvation of which the New Testament speaks. We are being brought to God. Our Lord Jesus died on the cross to remove the objective curse that was on our way.

He has sent forth the Holy Spirit to deal with the subjective curse in our own souls, in our own natures, to apply the merits of his atonement to our lives, and he has given us his word to direct us, and he himself reigns on the throne to see that what is necessary to be done to bring us to glory, he will perform. So that the picture we have of our Lord Jesus in the New Testament, especially in Peter's letters and the epistle to the Hebrews, is of an almighty high priest and king, seated at the father's right hand, waiting till his enemies made his footstool, bringing many sons into glory. Not halfway, not within sight of the promised land, but into the glory of it.

And he himself is able to do that, because he lives in the power of an endless life. Now the question that concerns Peter here is this. It's a very practical one.

How should men and women who participate in this kind of salvation, who are being brought to God, whom the blessed Savior, by his Holy Spirit and his own intercession at the father's right hand, is bringing home to God, how should they behave in an alien, hostile, pagan, putrid world? How should you and I as Christians behave in a pagan world? That's the practical question. Now this is answered in many ways in Scripture, but Peter right here has his own way of doing it, and I believe it is most helpful. He lays his finger, he places his finger on something here, which I think you will agree with me, is very crucial for an understanding of the spiritual battle to which you and I are called.

Now let's begin. Let's look first of all at the mastery that is envisaged for the Christians here. Just note that particular stress again as we read these two verses.

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, or the same mind, it says in some of our translations, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. The fact that Christianity takes a realistic view of man in his present condition as a sinner, must never be allowed to

obliterate or even for a moment hide the fact that man was created the most glorious being.

He was made after God's own image. Not only that, but he was given a task in the universe which was a representative of God. He was to populate the universe.

God had created. Procreation was a gift given to him. And having so done, he was to rule all things to the glory of the God who had made him, and given him the privileges of life.

You remember the words, to go back to Genesis, God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Now don't stop there after the statement, fill the earth, because it goes on, fill the earth and subdue it. And then the next statement adds, rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, and every living thing, every living creature that moves on the ground, etc.

Now you see, man was made, man was created with this high and glorious end in view. Not only did he bear the image of God in his being, in his nature, but he was to rule, in a sense, as God rules, but under God the Creator. He was, as someone has said it, he was God's vice-regent over the universe.

Now something happened, as you and I know full well. And in consequence of what happened, not only did man become incapable of ruling the universe around him, but he became incapable of ruling the universe within him. He became incapable of ruling his own desires, his own thoughts, his own will, and so forth.

And then lost control of things around. But thanks be to God, the message of redemption is a message of reclamation, of redemption in the true sense of the word. By the grace of God and the power of God, man is redeemed back from that situation, so that he is able once again to regain control of himself, and to re-assume lordship of his environment and of circumstances.

That's the glory of the redemption announced in Scripture. Now I want you to notice two or three things about this, which are so important, as they're brought out here by Peter. In the first place, those who are truly Christian, says Peter, will soon manifest their God-given capacity to distinguish between right and wrong.

A very simple statement, and not only simple, but elementary. We're familiar with the poles, the north and the south pole. There are other poles, too.

Moral poles. And one of the first things that will characterize a man or a woman that is a Christian, that has moved from death into life, is this. He or she will suddenly become aware that there are moral poles.

There is light and there is darkness. There is black and there is white. There is what God wills and there is what man in his fallenness desires.

And the two are poles apart. Now this is very elementary, but it is most important. Those of us to whom the ministry of the Word of God is committed, and others of course, but perhaps especially to evangelists and pastors, the privilege is given of seeing this coming to birth in the souls of so many people.

Sometimes their background was terribly dark, terribly bleak and black. And there was very little, if any, distinction between one thing and another. The main distinction in life was, does it please me or not? Do I like it or not? Do I want it or not? If I want it then, well, it's fine.

If I don't like it then, it's no good. But when the grace of God has come into those lives, things differ. The great division is, does it please God? Does God will it? Does God bless it? Or is it simply something that I myself want? That I myself like and desire? One has seen it a thousand times.

Sometimes it takes a little while before it expresses itself fully, of course. But very often it emerges. And this is this is surely very thrilling in the 20th century, in such a decadent age as this.

I find it's one of the most thrilling things, pointing to the omnipotent grace of God. To see young Christians, almost in a moment, suddenly realizing that there are these moral foci. There is hell and there is heaven.

There is black and there is white. And even though they may not know for some time exactly what fits into each category, for they do not know the Word of God, they know that it exists. And life henceforth is a matter of living the right and not the wrong.

Second thing is this. Ere the kind of mastery envisaged by Peter can be actually practiced, it's necessary to be able to distinguish between what belongs to these two realms. And Peter refers to them very significantly in this way.

What belongs to human passions, is one translation, the RSV. In the old King James, what belongs to the lusts of men, and our new international version says, more correctly really, human desires on the one hand, and what belongs to the will of God on the other. Now it's not enough, says Peter, to know that there are these two divisions, morally speaking.

We must be able to know what really belongs to the sheer desires of human nature, fallen on the one hand, and what really belongs to the will of God the Holy One, our Creator, on the other. These two poles must be clearly fixed on our spiritual compass, for they represent two diametrically opposite moral foci. Now you will appreciate the reason why Peter, therefore, has much to say about, in the earlier chapters, about holiness, about fellowshiping together, about feeding upon the Word as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow up by it.

How can we grow up? How can we distinguish between right and wrong, in order, as he said, to cast aside the evil things of our lives, and to desire that which is good, and to be drawing nearer to our Lord Jesus Christ? How can we? Well, we need to read his Word, we need to fellowship together, we need to avail ourselves of the blood of Christ for cleansing, we need to become holy. To go back to our subject of Wednesday evening. And so he has much to say about that.

But then there is something else here. The mastery that the Apostle requires of Christian people, however, goes beyond the acknowledgment of the existence of right and wrong, that which emanates from fallen human nature, and that which is the will of God, and it comes here. If we are to be the kind of people that the Apostle calls upon us to be, we must learn to align ourselves with the will of God, even over against the desires of our own fallen natures.

A man is divided against himself because of sin, and in the Christian life, by the Spirit of God, by the transformation wrought in our nature by God, in regeneration, we must learn to take sides with God, even over against our own selves. I hope we all know what that is. It's never a pleasant thing.

I remember Dr. Lloyd-Jones on one occasion shocking some ministers in a monthly ministers' meeting that we used to have in London, by saying that it is really necessary for every man and woman of God, every now and again, to talk to himself or herself. Take yourself by the scruff of the neck and talk to

yourself, he said. I don't know whether we ever do that, but we need to do something like that, and we need to look at ourselves and apply these things to ourselves, and sometimes talk loudly to ourselves.

We cannot serve our human desires and at the same time serve the will of God. We've got to be on the one side, over against the other. We've got to take sides.

They are irreconcilable. Consider the negative first. As a result, he does not live the rest of his life, of his earthly life, for evil human desires.

Peter unhesitatingly prohibits all kinds of behavior that springs from what he calls human desires or passions. Now, the King James translates that as passion, or in the plural, passions. But you know the Greek word is simply the word for desires, or desire.

But the fact is, you see, in fallen human beings like you and myself, our very desires, our passions, because they've been polluted, and they have a tendency to go away from God, away from the will of God, away from the standard of God, rather than towards God. Basically, they're but desires. The very word is used in a good sense of our Lord, of our Lord himself, who had no sin.

When he, for example, tells his disciples concerning the last Passover, he says, with desire, have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. Now, that's the very same word that is used for passion elsewhere. Same basic word, but you see, in Jesus, desire was pure desire.

There was nothing wrong in it. Now, says Peter, anything that springs from your own natural desires, because you're fallen, anything that springs from your own natural desires, you must avoid. And you must align yourselves wholly with the will of God to do that which God has ordained and planned and revealed in his holy word.

Would to God we could take this seriously. It would save us so much trouble in life, and it would enrich not only our experience of salvation, but it would make everything so very much more real, and probably our lives so much more fruitful. There are these moral foci.

They are irreconcilable. But now, we must be on the side of the will of God over against even the desires of our own natures, saving so far as they too come within the orbit of God's will. Now, if you're studying the doctrine of sanctification or whatever, you and I need to take notice of this.

There's the negative over against that forbidden negative. Peter puts this unqualified positive, the will of God. Here then is the mastery to which we are called in Christ and summoned by his apostle.

It's a renewal of that elevating lordship over oneself. You see where we're coming to? He wants to take us back where Adam was meant to be. He wants us to be lord of our own natures, lord of our minds, lord of our imaginations, lord of our wills, lord of ourselves, under the lordship of heaven.

This is what man was meant to be. We've lost our crown because of sin. We regain more than our crown because of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this is our inheritance.

This is our calling. Now, the question is, how? Of course I'm aware of the fact that this passage doesn't tell us everything. No one passage of Scripture tells us everything.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable, and therefore we need to take the purview of the whole Scripture and not concentrate exclusively upon any one text. But there is something very

precious here. Merely to be presented with the challenging demand might well break the hearts of all of the sensitive people, especially in an environment such as we live.

It may very well be that some of you are feeling a little downhearted in the light of what we've said already. How can I master my own evil nature when I have to look at the things that come on the television screen that we have in our house? Well, I don't have to look at it for one thing, have I? But assuming that I do, how can I master my thoughts, my desires, or what I see on hoardings, or what I hear with my ears, or what I read? How am I to do the will of God as opposed to the desires of the other men's fallen natures, or my own, or both included? How? Well, now, Peter has the answer. He has a very significant part of the total answer of the New Testament.

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude. Now, that puts his finger right on the spot. It says it is possible.

Let me put it generally before we bring out the particulars. In general, Christ died and he did something in his death that makes it possible. Now, we may not understand that all at the moment, but basically, says Peter, therefore, because Christ suffered in his body and died, that's the root of it.

But now, he says, adding to that, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, or the same attitude. And you know, the picture that we have here is the picture that we have in Ephesians 6, for example, put on the whole armor of God. It's the picture of a soldier putting on his armor for war.

But it's one action here. Put on, says the Apostle Paul, put on the armor one mighty, massive, significant, central, cardinal piece of weapon. And that is, it's the mind of Christ.

Now, let's come to this. The first thing to notice is that the achievement of this standard is said to depend upon the possession of the right mind. The Greek word is *ennoia*.

Now, in the battle against sin and in the pursuit of the will of God, it is important to realize that the secret of success lies not in anything in us. Basically, that is by nature, naturally speaking. And it doesn't basically depend upon whether we are physically strong.

Now, it's good to be physically strong and physically well. Of course it is. But success spiritually doesn't depend upon your being a big, strapping person who can cope with things physically.

You may not be. You may be a weakling physically. Neither does depend upon cleverness, intellectually or otherwise, or cunning.

What does it depend upon? Well, says Peter, it depends upon your putting on, like an armor, a piece of armor, something that was in the Lord Jesus Christ and can be made yours because he died to make it possible. You are to put on his mind. It's not your strength, it's not your ingenuity that's going to get you through.

We need to learn the message of the prophet, not by might nor by power, but it's from somewhere else. And if we are to be able to say no to the old things of our fallen nature, yes to the will of God, it must be because of this in large measure. Neither is it enough simply to say that it's a matter of having the right mind or attitude, a matter of possessing or of being possessed by that particular mind or attitude.

This mind is a special. It refers to something quite special. The word translated in this way is translated in Hebrews 4.12 in the King James by the word intent or intent.

I think the pronunciation varies in different sides of the Atlantic. Intent or intent. Not just the mind, the thought, the apparatus of thinking, but put on the intent of our Lord Jesus Christ, the attitude of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You have to put that on. The word before us comes to stand really for a resolute and unflagging fixation of the mind upon something. Now the word fixation is used in a bad sense very often, isn't it? You've heard it said many a time, oh well he's got a fixation and we're not going to shake him off anything.

But now it can be used in a good sense and that's what it means here. When a man's whole mind is resolutely fixed on something and you simply cannot shift it. Now brothers and sisters that was the anion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That was the attitude of the Son of God and that was the mind that brought him in the first place from the glory into this inglorious world of ours and which from the crib to the cross bore him along. He had this anion, this mind, this fixation if you will. He was determined to do it.

And this is something he has made possible for you and for me to have by his death upon the cross and by his resurrection and session at the Father's right hand and the gift of his spirit and of his word he has made it possible for you and for me to have the mind of Christ himself. Peter says it must be the same attitude or the same mind as our Lord Jesus had himself. Now what was it? Can we spell it out? Is there any more to be said about it? Well let me try to say one or two things.

What was the feature of this so-called fixation of our Lord? What was this mind, this determination of his? Can we spell it out? Well yes and it's quite familiar to us when we come down to it. Most of us, most of us could do this ourselves. There is first his unqualified devotion to the sovereign will of his father.

Now we're not suggesting that this was only evident during the last days of his life though it became supremely so during the latter days and weeks of his life. But it was always the case. Indeed we have been reminded recently of that incident in his boyhood as a boy of 12 years of age in the temple.

Whether the words mean, wist he not that I must be in my father's house or about my father's business doesn't matter for the moment. It is evident there in the young boy of 12 years of age our Lord Jesus was dedicated to do the father's will. The fixation was there if I may use the word in a good sense.

His mind was resolved. His will was determined. It was set.

The sails of his life were already set. The will of my father, my father's business, my father's house. The commands of God were his court of appeal in every assault made by Satan upon him or by men.

Whatever was suggested to him be it in the wilderness, in that onslaught with the devil or be it at any other stage during his life doesn't matter where the temptation came from. From evil men, wicked men or the most religious of people. His mind was set.

If it is in accordance with the father's will it is right and it must be done. If not it must be set on one side. And facing the supreme agony of the cross he says not my will but thine be done.

Not even the desires of his own sinless. Let's get that. Sinless nature.

If they deviated in the least from that of the father not the desires of a sinless nature must be allowed to be expressed if they are in any wise in antipathy with the sovereign will of his father. You see Jesus' view of God the father was such that God could never ask anything wrong and never would. He believed that his father was altogether and absolutely good and wise and all-powerful and that if God asked for anything it must be good because there is no source of evil in himself and it is impossible for evil to influence him so that he would ask anything other than good.

There is no pressure from outside that can possibly win over the almighty and all-good God. Therefore in Jesus' estimation if the father required it must be done. We've lost that simplicity.

Our more philosophical way of thinking and there are other adjectives one could use has really brought us into a morass and we find it difficult to get out of it but to the Lord Jesus you see who really knew the father if the father asked it was right and he was dedicated to that. This is something we must make our own if we are to gain mastery over sin and temptation. We need to be resolved to do God's will whatever the circumstances and behind that again we need to have our Lord Jesus Christ's view of God.

People say that doctrine doesn't matter. Of course it does. Your view of God is reflected in everything you do.

If you disobey God you believe that God is worthy of your disobedience. If you obey him you believe that he is worthy of your obedience. Your view of God is reflected in every solitary thing you do.

Doctrine lies behind everything we say and think and preach or dream about. Our Lord's view of God was such as such. If it is his will it is necessary and it is right and there is nothing superior to it.

Everything else is inferior. Another factor in the mind or attitude of Christ follows from this namely an unswerving determination not to be motivated into any action by the sordid deeds or reactions of those whose cause God willed that he should dispose. Now let me spell that out a little.

Being wholly devoted to God's will he must not allow his reaction to people to be determined by their actions or reactions to himself. And this is very subtle. Jesus sought the good of men and women irrespective of their reaction to himself.

You see if I allow your reaction to me or somebody else's reaction to me to determine the way I think of you or I act towards that person then that person has more influence over me at that moment than God has. Just think about it. Here I meet someone on the street and we begin to talk and this person gets very angry and very agitated and I react in kind you see.

Now what happens at that point is this. That person has more influence over me at that moment than the Almighty God has. He or she determines the way I behave and therefore I'm a slave to human passion.

We say how can we avoid it? Well we can only avoid it by the grace of God. We can only avoid it by the power of the Holy Ghost. We can only avoid it by God's own enabling.

But we can avoid it. That's the gospel. If you and I allow other people's dealings towards us, reactions toward us, to rule and dominate the way we behave and we react towards them.

Brothers and sisters we are denying the grace of God. You see I'm saying something that I said this morning in a different context altogether. This is one reason why Jesus could accept a Judas among the

twelve and he reacted towards him as he did in all kindness and all grace.

He never allowed Judas's terrible intention to determine his reactions to Judas because God had willed him to live with a Judas for three years. God's will was perfect in the perfection of our great high priest in his manhood. See? That's why he allowed sinners to contradict him.

He could have contradicted them a thousand times over and finally and silenced them but he didn't do it. God's will was that it should be so and he did not react in kind. He reacted according to God's will.

He was ordained to be a man of suffering and of sorrows acquainted with grief and he accepted it. It was the will of God and so when people spat at him, stoned him, tried to get rid of him in one way or another or contradicted him or eventually nailed him to the cross, he didn't get angry with them. See? It was the Father's will that he should die the death of the wicked bearing the curse of others and so he said, Father forgive them for they don't know what they're doing.

See? This is the mind of Christ. His attitude, his deeds, his doings were not determined by the reactions of people but by the will of God. Not by fallen human nature in others or in and there was none in himself but by the will of God.

Neither did he simply do the will of God mechanically but with compassion. All this is a mystery in our Lord's life. How he could be compassionate and resolute as he was.

To have this mind of steel, this holy fixation on doing God's will and yet to be the compassionate person who sat with a woman at Syca's well and spoke so graciously to her, who touched the leper, who was moved with compassion for the multitudes because they didn't have anything to eat in the wilderness and they hadn't been there 24 hours. They'd only lost a meal probably, say two. They're not going to die but he cared for them, men and women.

He cared for them and when he gave his benefits, he didn't just hurl blessings from a distance. He got near to them. He let them touch him.

That dear woman in the crowd, you remember, who touched the tassel of his robe. She should never have been there. She was ceremonially unclean and anybody that she touched according to the Jews was made ceremonially unclean but she touched him.

Did he reprimand her? No. You see, you have this determination of steel, this iron will and yet this compassionate heart. The same is, same comes out when having challenged the hosts of the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, you hear him cry out of the pent-up anguish of his soul, Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem who killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto you. How often would I have longed to gather your little children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. That's what I wanted to do with you.

That's his heart and yet he had a mind of steel. Yes and to cap it all, my friends, oh this is a wonderful theme. And to cap it all, when Jerusalem had sent him to the cross and some of the leaders had gloated over their great triumph over Jesus of Nazareth.

He's out of the way forever. You remember what happened when he rose again on the morning of the third day and he came to the Mount of Commission. He sent them to begin preaching forgiveness where? In

Rome? No.

In Greece? No. To faraway heathen that have never spattered him or said an evil word about him? No. You know where he sent them to begin their work? In Jerusalem.

In the very headquarters of the Jewry that had planned his crucifixion and executed it under Rome. That's just like him. A mind of steel and a heart of grace.

Now says Peter, you've got to put that on. He's made it possible. He's made the provision.

He intercedes at God's right hand. He's given you the Holy Spirit. He's given you his word and he's given you all things that pertain to life and godliness.

If I quote from Peter's second epistle at this point, everything's given you. It's given you. Put it on man, woman, brother, sister.

This is what faith is meant to do. Put it on. Wear it.

Make use of it. Claim it as yours. If you say it's difficult, well go back on your knees again and try again.

And you say if you fail, what happens then? Go back on your knees again and try again and seek more grace. He giveth more grace. Peter then commands us Christians to arm ourselves in this way.

And you Christian and I can make this our attitude because he died. I'm going to end there tonight. Because he died.

You will doubtless note that the previous chapter closed with a reference to Christian baptism, among other things. And it is more than probable that the implications of baptism, genuine baptism, are still in Peter's mind as he unfolds the passage now before us. That being so, it has been widely considered that we probably have here the same kind of teaching as we have in in Romans chapter 6, where our incorporation into Christ is symbolized by baptism.

And being incorporated into Christ, we share in the life of Christ. And if I may refer, therefore, back again to that analogy at the end of chapter 3, Noah was in the ark. We are in Christ.

Not in an impersonal ark, but in the personal saving Son of God, incorporated into him, having life union with him, having his spirit. Now, says Peter, men and women, thus blessed, put on your heavy armor. You know, the word used here actually refers to heavy armor.

It's a bit of language from warfare. Put on your heavy armor. All the other armor is light in comparison with this.

This is part of the heavy armor of a Christian, the mind of Christ. Oh, how we need to grow. Am I not right when I say, brothers and sisters, that you and I are still where so many of those to whom Peter was writing were spiritually? And we find that the temptations of our lower natures are still haunting us and coming after us and mastering us.

This is a key not only to an understanding of the doctrine of sanctification, but to the experiencing of it. There is something to put on that was made available at the cross, and it is something that each one of us must learn to do by and for ourselves. Out of our faith in Christ and his faithfulness to his people, out of

fellowship with him, we may draw upon the mind of steel without losing the compassionate heart.

God grant us that. I was browsing again this week over the hymn we've been singing as our theme hymn at summer fellowship this year, and I thought, how very applicable to this. Can it be our prayer as we conclude? Do you remember these words? Come down, O love divine, seek thou this soul of mine, and visit it with thine own ardor glowing.

O comforter, draw near, within my heart appear, and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing. Now this, O let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn to dust and ashes in its heat consuming. And let thy glorious light shine ever on my sight, and clothe me round the while my path illumining.

And so the yearning strong, the mind of steel, and so the yearning strong with which the soul will long, shall far outpass the power of human telling. For none can guess the grace till he becomes the place wherein the Holy Spirit has his dwelling. God grant it.

Let us pray. Lord, our God and Father, we thank you for another Lord's Day evening in your earthly courts. We thank you that it is your habit to visit with your people when they meet in Jesus' name.

And we have not been unmindful of your presence with us even in the heat of this evening. Teach us the lessons of your word. Impress them upon us to the end that our lives may bear the impress and tell forth the excellences of our all glorious Lord and Savior.

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