

The Delapidated House

by Jenny Daniel

The sermon challenges listeners to assess the state of their spiritual lives and seek necessary repairs through repentance and God's grace.

Duration: 41:55

Scripture: Psalm 127:1, Ecclesiastes 10:18, Ezekiel 3:27, Ezekiel 8:12, Matthew 5:16, Matthew 7:22-27, Luke 15:10, Ephesians 4:32

Topics: "Godly Home"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the state of a house that was once a shining example of God's creative power. The house, which represents our testimony as believers, is described as dilapidated and neglected, a far cry from its former glory. The speaker emphasizes the importance of windows in a house, as they bring in light and expose what is inside. However, if the house is not properly maintained and repaired, cracks will appear and the testimony will be damaged. The sermon serves as a reminder to take care of our spiritual houses and protect our testimonies from neglect and decay.

Transcript

I just want to say thank you for the privilege of being here. Of course, I don't feel comfortable in the front, but it is a privilege and I pray that God will bless us and I want to say thank you to everybody who decorated our little place and all the goodies and the sweets which we have all tucked into already. So thank you very much.

I'm going to do something different today. I'm going to just start off by teaching you Afrikaans children's song, seeing we've got so many children here. So is, can we all stand up? Can we all stand up? Okay, we're going to sing.

Now, I haven't got a singing voice, so you'll have to excuse my voice, but I think you will and you'll just follow, you'll get the words as I sing it. One of the essential things for us as Christians is to read our Bibles and what we have to do, pray every day. So, Lees jouw Bibel, bid elke dag, bid elke dag, bid elke dag.

Lees jouw Bibel, bid elke dag, en jij groei, groei, groei. En jij groei, groei, groei. En jij groei, groei, groei.

Lees jouw Bibel, bid elke dag, en jij groei, groei, groei. Verwaarloes jouw Bibel, vergeet om te bid, vergeet om te bid, vergeet om te bid. Verwaarloes jouw Bibel, vergeet om te bid, en jij krim, krim, krim.

En jij krim, krim, krim. En jij krim, krim, krim. Verwaarloes jouw Bibel, vergeet om te bid, en jij krim, krim, krim.

All right, I'll just do one, so we can all sit down and I think we'll all be awake now. Let's just have a word of prayer before we share. Dear Father, I thank Thee for Thy presence.

Where two or three are gathered together in Thy name, there art Thou in the midst of them. Thank you, Father that Thou art here, and we look to Thee to speak to us, to reach our hearts, and to bless us, Father. Help us to have open ears and obedient hearts to Thy word, in Jesus' name, amen.

Well, my subject for today is a dilapidated house, a dilapidated house. And recently I was paging through my father, who died a year ago, through his Afrikaans Bible, and I found a little paper, and on this paper a few ideas were written, and amongst them were these three words, een vervolle huis, a dilapidated house. And these three words arrested my attention.

They followed me, they confronted me, and they challenged me. A dilapidated house. I seemed to see this dilapidated house in my mind's eye.

It danced before me in my moments of quietness. I saw this house from all angles, and the more I looked at this house, the more lessons sprang out of the windows and doors towards me. It spoke to my heart.

And I realized, as never before, in that simple statement in my daddy's Afrikaans Bible, it's possible to have a house solidly built on the rock, begun the right way. But with the passage of time, neglect has come in. The house has not been preserved, not looked after.

The necessary repair has not been implemented. The repair that is so vital, the confession of faults and sin, and cracks have appeared. The wind and the rain have taken their toll, and the house has become dilapidated.

It's a blot on the landscape. The first glory has disappeared. It's no longer treasured and cared for, the testimony.

It's no longer protected against damage. What a sad picture, that dilapidated house. And today we're going to speak and challenge every one of us, what does your house look like? When people see your house, is God telling you that there's urgent repair needed in your house? Let's look at a few scriptures that deal with the word house or home.

In Psalm 127 verse 1, it says, Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Matthew 7, 24 to 27, we all know that verse.

Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man that built his house upon a rock. Ecclesiastics 10 verse 18 says, By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through. Ezekiel 3 verse 27 speaks of a rebellious house.

The kind of house when you pass, you put your hands over your ears. Things have gone out of control. God is not feared anymore.

His outstretched hand of protection and repair and maintenance has been pushed away. A rebellious house. Dilapidation can be on the inside and on the outside.

Recently, I went with somebody. They were interested in buying a house. They wanted to sell their house and buy another house.

I went around with them from house to house. It's actually a few years ago and we just couldn't find the right house. But when I was gone, this person said to me, a new house came on the market.

It was a house of substantial size. It was very presentable on the outside. It seemed a bargain offer.

And it was just in the right area. It was unbelievable to think this enormous, beautiful looking house was such a cheap price. And they were told there was a homeschooling family in the house.

So there's lots of room to do schooling. And this person was a homeschooler. So what could be more ideal? All that space.

So she and her husband and the agent hurried to go look at the house. But when they got inside of the house, they were shocked to see the rooms, the walls, the built-in cupboards. This house that had been nearly built a few years ago was ruined and pulled apart.

But this lady said when she saw the face of the mother with all the children wildly running around, boisterous and unruly, she just felt so sorry for the mother. But the tragedy was that the house in such a short time had lost its value. It had been pulled apart.

Dear friends, what does your house look like? What is inside or hidden in your house, your life? Ezekiel 9 to 10, I don't know what chapter this is. It says, go in and see the wicked and detestable things they are doing here. So I went in and looked and I saw portrayed over all the walls, all kind of crawling things and unclean animals and all the idols of Israel.

And then we hear these words. Then he said unto me, Son of man, has thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark? Every man in the chambers of his imagery. For they say the Lord seeth us not.

The Lord hath forsaken the earth. The Lord seeth us not. What is hidden in the inner chambers of your life, your house, your heart? Our subject for today is a dilapidated house.

It's gone to ruin. It's disintegrated. It's not holding together anymore.

It's become an eyesore. Now, it reminds me of years and years and years ago. My dad was quite an adventurous man.

He had lots of courage and he always dreamt of taking land that had never been worked on, never been tilled, rugged. They called it virgin soil bush. And to just work that land into crops and fertile ground.

So he sold his farm and he bought a tract of land that was just as wild as it was since the creation. And he decided he was going to work on this land. No human hand had worked or plowed on it or sowed crops on it before.

And he knew it would take a lot of initiative, hard work, and imagination. But he had vision. And the vision didn't only include the land.

He would have to build a house from scratch. And so, but a beautiful house was built on the hill. And the house was really a testimony to my mom's creative power.

Months before they built the house, my mom went to auctions. And he demolished historic buildings. And she purchased these old stairs and windows at a low price.

Or she got them for nothing that were available to the public. And not everybody realized the beauty that was underneath. It was dirty, peeling paint.

Some of it was in pieces. It was full of grime. And people said to my mother, what are you doing with all this rubbish? But my mother saw the potential in every piece, every broken piece.

And with effort, love, and sacrifice, she and the farm workers, as eager as she, made this transformation. Every window and door and stair rail was restored to its former glory. And my father was always interested in every project of my mother.

And so, the end result was amazing. There were gasps of amazement. It was as if it was a new Victorian building, house, with high domed windows almost to the ceiling.

A black slate floor from the neighboring farms the slate was got. Yellow wood solid kitchen cupboards. And the house was a double story with gables.

They did it themselves with a family friend. We only stayed in the house for two years, so I could just tell you how beautiful it was. And it was seen from miles away.

It was this enormous house on the hill. But it wasn't long before hail, storms, flooded rivers, took the crops that my father had grown. And God had to send a buyer in the nick of time, or they would go bankrupt.

And God did. God intervened. And my dad had to sell the farm and the beautiful house and start all over again.

But not so long ago, some of our family wondered, are we remembering correctly? Was the house as beautiful and as big as we remembered from our boarding school days? And so we decided to go back and look at the house to see if it was preserved, if it was still the house that stood out upon the hill. And so we went, but I was terribly scared because I didn't know how I would go back to my mom and say, they've taken out the old-fashioned windows and they've put new ones in, or the roof has fallen in. It's fallen apart.

But we went, and as we rode up the hill, I didn't even want to open my eyes to see because I didn't know what I would see. Perhaps the house wouldn't be there. What was our delight and joy? To see that the house looked as brand new.

Over the years, the windows and the doors had been sanded and varnished. The house had been repainted many times. The cracks had been repaired.

It was still the house that stood out upon the hill above others. And it was wonderful to go back to my mom and say, Mommy, it looks as if it was the day we moved in years ago. There were no broken windows, no rotten frames, no cracks in the walls.

The roof was whole and not fallen in. It was as good as new. Do you remember the day when God saved you? When you were a new creation in Christ? The house on the rock with the walls that were white with

His righteousness? You were an advertisement of God's creative power.

What does your house look like now? Is it dilapidated, neglected, a mess of ruins? People shake their head and say, can this be the house on the hill? Never in our wildest imaginations could we have dreamt that the person who had such a bright testimony has landed in this state. It reminds me a bit of when we were in New Zealand. Now, New Zealand is very English.

They do things the English way. So when you have tea, you have tea in a pot. And we went to a little town called Stratton.

And it was a very Shakespearean town. The little streets had all the names of Shakespeare. And at 12 o'clock, Romeo would come out of a window in a wax figure and tell Juliet he loved her.

And she would come out of a window. And at 12 o'clock, all the people used to stand in the town and watch this whole scene from Shakespeare. Now, Keith and I had to speak to the ladies and Keith to everybody at a little school.

And in between, we walked around the block. Of course, Keith likes me to do exercise. But I was very curious because the one block I walked around, there was a very thick fence of bushes that went the whole block.

I mean, it was a long block. And it was just one fence. And in between the bushes, there was the most beautiful rusted ironwork that stuck out.

So I said, Keith, look, this long row of bushes, the ironwork goes all the way. There must be a building behind this. So I must admit, we pushed the bushes aside and we peeped through.

And 100 feet from the fence, there was the most beautiful building. Exquisite carvings on the stonework. The architecture was delightful.

There were cornices and the windows in the roof. It was like a make-believe palace. We couldn't believe what was hidden behind this fence.

But tragically, that beautiful, magnificent building was ruined and totally neglected. No one was in it anymore. The paint was falling off.

The windows were broken. There were pieces of cement on the ground. There were birds' nests in the roof.

Day by day, it went into further disrepair. No one had lifted up a finger to save it. So I said to Keith, well, if I was a New Zealander and I was a multimillionaire, this is the kind of house I'd love to restore to its former glory.

But it's sad to see beauty gone to the darks. Are we a dilapidated house? Ecclesiastics 10 verse 18 says, by much slothfulness the building decayeth and through idleness of hands the house droppeth through. Is the glory of God's presence no longer there? The repair that was so vital, that confession of failings and sin was not done.

Those short accounts, the immediately making right with God, you neglected to keep your house in good repair. Your testimony is damaged. People click their tongues and shake their heads.

Instead of drawing your friends and loved ones, your neighbors, your children and acquaintances to God, you push them away because of the state of your house. All who see, see you, know there's a problem. It's open to the eye.

Though you've allowed a thick hedge of excuses and justifications to surround your house, you've grown a hedge around you. You say, I'm such a failure because of tiredness. Now there is a balance.

The Lord Jesus said to the disciples, come apart and rest a while. So we have to address tiredness, but you can't use tiredness as an excuse for sin. The hedge of difficult neighbors, my circumstances, the pressure I'm under, my finances, others attitudes to me, that hedge has been built around your house.

Is that so? God's eyes are on you with great compassion and tender love. He says, my child, your house is dilapidated. Its repair is desperately needed.

Repentance is desperately needed. Examine your house, your walk, your relationships, the place the world has in your house. Who walks through your front door? What goes on behind closed doors? God calls us, repair your house so that you don't become a greater disgrace.

If you do not arrest the dilapidation now, how do we repair a house? How do we do that? We need to acknowledge my house needs repair. I have to call on God to intervene, to make my house as good as new. That day when God saved my soul, his blood to cleanse away all the dirt and the Holy Spirit to strengthen the tottering walls.

The house sadly neglected. The walls are cracked and brown. The windows have been broken and eyesore to the town.

Birds have lodged in the rooftop. The front door fallen down behind a thick fence daily. People pass with a frown.

Is that how people see me? A house in disrepair? That seems to say the owner for each state does not care. Temptation often enters. The door no longer there to stop her and to borrow.

She creeps in everywhere. The window panes are broken. The wind more fierce to me.

Therefore, I rail and complain. God, thou art cruel to me. The walls are scrawled with poor marks, no longer sparkling white, as I let friends persuade me to choose things far from right.

Dear God, will thou in mercy repair the house, I pray? Acknowledging it needs it, I cry to thee today. But now let's open a house under the searchlight of God, under his searching gaze and ask himself, what needs repair? What needs intervention? Now, when I think of a house, I immediately think of the hidden part, the foundation. God's eyes can see beneath the ground.

He knows if the house is on the rock. Now, I don't know about wooden houses, but in South Africa, our houses need very deep foundations. We have terrible winds where we live and the house does a bit of a shake, but I just am very grateful we've got a deep foundation.

What happens with a deep foundation? They dig deep ditches, stones and ground is thrown in and cement to form the foundation that the house rests upon. And it reminds me of the deep repentance that is needed. Why deep? Because it has to be an honest confession of sin.

Why deep? Because I've got to say to God and man, I am lost. Now, I was once, a girl came to visit me and she said she wanted to build a house on the rock. She wanted to get saved.

So if somebody comes to my house, I immediately offer them some hot tea. So I offered her tea and I started questioning her, where this girl was at? Were there any ditches dug? And she said to me, eventually in the conversation, it came to light that she was in a relationship with a married man and she still wanted to get saved and carry on with the relationship. So I said, no, no, no, no, no.

That will not work. The house has to be built on the rock and to reach the rock, repentance are the ditches that have to be dug for God's blood to wash it and cement it firmly onto the rock. To dig deep is not easy.

It's pain involved. I have to be honest. I have to admit I'm a sinner before God can do the entire and full and perfect work of perfectly, firmly, unchangeably fixing the house onto the rock and to keep it standing when the storms lash.

And what does the scripture say? Acts 3, 19, repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. 1 John 1 verse 8, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1, 9, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Matthew 7, 24, therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon the rock. Heaven rejoices when the foundation is struck on the rock of ages. What does it say in Luke 15 verse 10? Likewise, I'm saying to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.

Isn't that wonderful? But how tragic are ever when only in eternity we find out that the house wasn't on the right foundation, it was never on the rock and therefore we will be sent to the unquenchable fiery furnace forever and ever and ever to burn in hell. Why do I say that? What does Matthew 7, 22 say? Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils and in thy name done many wonderful works. Verse 23, and then I will I profess unto them, I never knew you.

Depart from me ye that work iniquity. That's why we have to be so sure that we know without doubt that our house is founded on the rock. Now historic buildings sometimes have a plaque.

This is the day, this is the time when the foundation was laid and so too is unsaved. We have to come and there's a plaque in our life and we say that was the time, that was the day when I turned from darkness to light, when my house was cemented onto the rock. Brand new house, the walls are spotless white because it's his righteousness, not my righteousness, which is a gray hue, not the dark black walls of open unashamed sin, but it's been, it's white walls that rise up, the other ones are broken down.

The open furrows of repentance is the admission that I'm a sinner and those furrows are filled with God's, the Lord Jesus' blood, his grace and his forgiveness, a sturdy structure upon the rock. You know, I believe when the Lord Jesus spoke about the wise man built his house upon the rock and the foolish man, I believe those two houses look pretty much the same. I think the windows were equally beautiful in the wise man's house and the foolish man's.

I think they look pretty much the same and when people passed by, they said, oh well, these two houses look pretty sturdy, they can withstand the storms. The only difference was the hidden foundation, the

unseen to the human eyes, which was the prospect of heaven or hell. Before we start the repair on our house, let's make doubly sure that the house is on the right foundation.

The fool's house rose up before us, beautiful to the eye. It seemed that it would weather the storms that should come nigh. But when the heavens opened, the clouds poured forth their rain, the house on the sands had crumbled, never to rise again.

The wise man dug his trenches open and deep and wide till he reached the solid bedrock. I found it in joy, he cried. No fear when the hail descended, the wind, the sleet, the snow.

He had the rock as his anchor. No storm could bring him low. Hallelujah.

Now we're gonna hasten and quickly look at the structure above the foundation. What that which is seen by passers-by, by our children, by our parents, by our brothers, sisters, grandchildren, grandfathers, grandmothers, neighbors, all who pass by. What does our house look like? What about the windows? Windows are essential to any house.

Without windows, the house is dark. The sun comes through the windows and gives warmth. I remember going with an estate agent, also with people who were looking for a house to rent.

And the estate agent was just enthusing about the big windows. The sun she enthused goes into every room. Every room is bright with sunlight.

The windows also expose what is inside the house. The bigger the windows, the more open and the more the sunlight exposes. Are your windows clean? Can God's light shine through them? Is your life open to God's searching gaze? Psalm 139 verse 23 and 24.

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. My heart, my life, everything is open before thee.

But a window also speaks to me of relationships with others. Now, Keith and I like walking and there's a street that we walk up. We just walk up the road, Mill Street, Upper Mill Street and we walk down again and there's lots of very old-fashioned houses in that street.

And the windows are open so we can't help but see as we walk, if you look right and look left, into the beautiful interiors of some of these houses. Is your life open to the scrutiny of others? Or do you continually have drawn curtains? You don't want other people to see what's inside your life. You are unapproachable because you're scared that if they get to know you too well, they'll discover what you're hiding and secretly busy with.

Now, when I was a child, I was petrified of going to a certain house. This was a very old-fashioned house but it had thick walls and heavy dark maroon velvet curtains on the windows. And the rooms were so dark and so depressing that I used to get scared just to be in the house.

It was pretty dark. The curtains were drawn at all times. Now, are you like that? Your curtains are drawn at all times.

You're scared to trust people. Those who are trying to reach out to you and you're scared to reach out to other people. Thick, dark velvet curtains bar the warmth of friendship.

Contact with people. You gloomy and you dispel gloom. What does Ephesians 4.32 say? And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even if they do wrong to you, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

Matthew 5 speaks in, Let your light so shine before men, it can't shine unless the windows are clear, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Are our windows transparent to God's eye ever clear? His light can shine unhindered. No curtains drawn with fear.

What about souls around us? Do we reach out with care? Or are we wrapped in darkness, the hangings of despair? Our home is somber, dismal, shrouded each darkened room. We nurse the wrongs we've suffered, perpetuating doom. Now, another reason which I've mentioned before for the closed curtains are the hidden things that are there.

Now, when somebody's arrested by the police, they usually go to their house and investigate and find surprising things in the person's house that explain his behavior. They find hidden things nobody knew about hidden in the house. And so too with our lives.

The curtains are drawn because of the hidden things that we are busy with, whether it's in books, internet, wrong relationships. Then He said unto me, Son of man, I have seen what the agents of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery. For they say the Lord seeth us not.

The Lord hath forsaken the earth. God does see. Jealousy and pride can also be hidden in the corners of our house.

God knows about it. He calls us to draw the curtains aside, to allow the light of His Word to expose what is wrong so that His blood can cleanse it. How can we think that we can hide sin from God's piercing gaze? He sees each hidden corner exposed in full light blaze.

Windows should always be there to let His Word shine in, that we can keep the corners swept clean from any sin. Now let's quickly look at the front door. At all times, the front door of our house should be shut against temptation and sin.

Are your hinges tight? Is the lock in place? Is the bar drawn across the door? Now in our house, there's a very strong crossbar because people come to our house sometimes and they try and force their way in and they bang and they're not good people. Often they want to do wrong. And I'm so glad for that very sturdy crossbar on our house.

Is the bar on your front door against temptation and sin, held firmly against the intruder? And what is the bar? What is the lock? It's the Word of God that protects us from sin. It gives us courage in the onslaught against our enemies. We know we're safe in God's hands when we are resting on the Word.

Just as I thank God for the bar and lock that held our house against intruders, me from intruders, so we will be safe if the Word of God is in place, the slot is on, carefully kept in good order, and the nails of obedience are tight. We don't have to fear temptation or the foe. Psalm 119 verse 87, They'd almost consumed me upon the earth, but I forsook not thy precepts.

Is the lock firm and in its place, keeping me safe from sin? When sin comes knocking at my door, a quick entrance to win? God's Word, a lock upon the door that bids us to stand firm against any intruders with admonitions stern. Now, another aspect of the house is the telephone. Most houses have a telephone,

don't they? And it's good to have a landline because the cell phones aren't always reliable.

Now, we battled for months because we fixed something on the outside of our house and they cut the landline and it took months and months and months and months, I think almost a year before they reconnected it. And I was so relieved when it was in working order again. That line, the line of prayer should be in working order in our house.

Now, my mom and dad often had problems with their landline and I remember a time when my poor dad was in the house with my mom on the farm still and my mom had a collapse, she had a stroke and the landline wasn't working. And in the middle of the night, he couldn't call the emergency services. So in the dark, he had to run leaving my mother to the neighbors, their phone was working and they were able to get the ambulance.

Grateful that the ambulance was on its way. It reminds me of the tragedy of the broken line of prayer of the Christian whose house is founded on the rock. Things have gone wrong.

The line is not in order. God is not my immediate refuge, the person I go to. Can it be that the line is so seldom used that I don't even know the line of prayer is out of order? Our line must be in order.

It is a tragedy if a prayer is not our immediate resource in times of trouble. God is our refuge, a very present help in trouble. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress.

My God, in Him will I trust. Prayer is what I immediately turn to when things go wrong. Dear Lord, I must confess that prayer is not my first resource.

When things go wrong, I'd rather seek other help, of course. But things do not get better. Men could not deal with sin and in darkness, no light could I from their counsels win.

Oh, God, I bow in deep shame. The line, the shame, the line I will repair with each problem. I'll seek Thee for help in constant prayer.

And lastly, the roof of the dilapidated house in New Zealand was full of holes and in a sorry state. And that roof speaks to me of our trust in God. The roof, after all, is between us and heaven.

He is wisdom. He is undertaking what He sends across our path. Psalm 18, verse 30 says, As for God, His way is perfect.

The word of the Lord is tried. He is a buckler to all those who, that trust in Him. Now, my uncle and aunt bought a house, a beautiful old Tudor house that came with a farm.

And it was magnificent, but they weren't satisfied with the roof. So they decided they would take off the tin roof and they would replace it with a new roof. I don't know what kind of a roof, probably a Harvey tile.

So what they did is they removed the whole roof. And what happened when the roof was removed? The whole house caved in and they lost the beautiful house. All the walls fell in.

Our house will crumble if we question God's dealings. What God allows in our life and across our life. Let us, like Joseph, trust God, though we suffer many injustices to find out at last.

Genesis 50, verse 20. But as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring it about as it is this day to save many people alive. God meant it for good.

We can safely trust in God. He knows what he's doing. He is in his heaven.

We need not fear. The roof of my house was broken. I doubted God, his love, questioning all his dealings that he rules up above.

But now I am ashamed that the roof was not repaired. How could I fear the future when I knew that God cared? Now today, God has asked each of us, including me, to examine our house. What is being exposed under his searchlight? God is asking you, is the house built upon the rock? Have you ever dug those deep trenches of repentance that the blood of the Lord Jesus could cleanse, you clean, and fill those trenches with his grace and forgiveness so that you are firmly established upon the rock of all ages? Is my house built upon the rock or is it on the sands? God asks us to be sure that we know on which it stands.

The house upon the rock is safe in the storms of life. It can, through God's enabling, survive sore trials and strife. The house upon the sands is a danger to behold, for it will fall for certain, damned, as God's word hath told.

What about the windows over your house? Are they open to God's searching gaze? Nothing is hid from him. Are they open to others as you reach out in love? Or are your curtains drawn, your blinds to keep others out? Your house is dark, like the house I feared to go in as a child. You're filled with gloom and you dispel gloom.

What about the front door? Is the front door locked? Is the bar, the slot firmly in place to bar out sin and temptation, even on the internet? And the telephone line of prayer, is it in working order? Is it often used? And what about those hidden things in your house that you think you can hide from God and man and indulge secret sin in? God knows all. And lastly, the roof. The perfect trust in God, the implicit faith that he knows best and he knows what he's doing.

Are there holes in your roof? Is your life dilapidated, needing repair, immediate repair? Call on God to help you and restore your house to its former glory. The walls that need cleansing, the fallen walls, the resolutions that have been broken, the cracks to be repaired. Call on God.

Acknowledge that perhaps your house is a blot and not a blessing and let God turn it into a blessing. Dear Lord, I stand before thee, a house in disrepair. Ashamed, confess, acknowledge.

It's crumbling everywhere. The roof is full of holes, Lord. The lock not firm and tight.

The windows dark and gloomy within. Things far from right. Thy sin has easy access.

The front door stands ajar. Thy word that should prevent it no longer there to bar. Forgive me, Lord, and cleanse me.

Rebuild, repair the wrong. The windows will be open. The door bolted and strong.

A house that is a blessing to all who comes its way. For God is honored in it constantly. Every day.

Amen.

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