

# Deep Calleth Unto Deep

by John Follette

---

*The sermon explores the call of deep unto deep, where the human heart cries out for God, and God's answer is Jesus, the Word made flesh.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 33:9, Psalm 42:7, Psalm 139:23, Proverbs 4:23, Jeremiah 17:9, John 1:14, Romans 8:27, Ephesians 3:18

**Topics:** "Human Condition", "Holy Spirit"

---

## Description

John Wright Follette preaches about the deep calling unto deep, exploring the profound depths of the human heart's need for God and the corresponding supply found in the great heart of Jehovah. He emphasizes the unutterable depths of the human heart, tainted by sin and desperately wicked, contrasting it with the unfathomable love and wisdom of God. The sermon delves into the cry for God that arises from the depths of human souls and the answer that God provides in Jesus, highlighting the Holy Spirit's role in filling the deep voids within us and the importance of yielding to His work.

---

## Transcript

THE CALL OF DEEP UNTO DEEP

Down in the depth of my nature

Where the issues of life are born,

From that unknown mystical realm,

Surviving through ages of storm,

A call is forever rising--

But its language I cannot speak.

It was born ere I had being,

'Tis the call of deep unto deep.

Our mother tongue here is awkward,

For no words can fully express

The needs in the depths of nature,  
In bondage to sin and distress.  
Our hearts in their depths sorely ache;  
They hunger; they call; and they seek--  
Then silently wait an answer  
To the call of deep unto deep.  
Down deep in the heart of our God,  
In mystical regions sublime,  
In the Godhead's holy council  
Long before our world or our time,  
An answer was fully prepared  
Every pain, every ache to meet,  
In Christ, God's only begotten,  
Is answer to deep unto deep.  
The Answer indeed was the Word,  
The Word when expressed was the Son.  
Oh language of God how profound!  
In answer what more could be done?  
The heart of our God is hungry,  
His portion, His people to seek.  
"I thirst," was cried by the Answer-  
'Tis the call of deep unto deep.

---John Wright Follette

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise (call) of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Psalm 42:7.

Although this Psalm is not purely Messianic we find in verse seven a most impressive and suggestive prophecy of Christ in His work of redemption. The picture is that of the boundless ocean evidently in great commotion. It is storm-swept. Its waves are lashed into fury and as they heave and rock, the wind sweeps down and whirls the water into gigantic waterspouts thus discovering deep vacuums which yawn and, as it

were, call one to another. Into the midst of this awful confusion and wild fury a helpless soul is cast and while the waves and billows sweep over and over him, his voice is raised in agony. Mingled with the boom and roar of the storm we hear him call out, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.'

Here is another interpretation, mentioned by the Editor of Elbethel, which is very suggestive and helpful. She shows how deep calling unto deep represents one unknown depth of need in our hearts moved upon by God and calling to another. This is so true. As he moves upon one "deep" in nature it calls for movement upon another and thus is God doing a deepening work in the hearts and lives of His children today. The waterspouts are means used by God in this wonderful work. His ways are not pleasing to the natural but are most effectual when permitted to work out His purpose for us.

One day the Lord brought this verse to my attention with still another application and lesson. It was soon after visiting the Grand Canyon in Arizona and I think for that reason it spoke with freshness of meaning. It was there that the significance of depth dawned upon my natural sense. I believe this canyon is considered the most sublime of all earthly spectacles. Even a most superficial description of the enormous abyss may hardly be put into words.

Standing upon the rim one overlooks a thousand square miles of pyramids and minarets, carved from painted depths. Many miles away and more than a mite below his feet, the tourist sees a tiny silver thread which he knows to be the giant Colorado. Imagine a stupendous chasm, in places from ten to thirteen miles wide from rim to rim, more than two hundred miles long in all of its meanderings, and more than a mile deep! I shall not presume to tell of its mysterious beauty--strange and unearthly. It is never the same. The colors change with every changing hour; it is ever undergoing transformation. The lights and shades, mists, filmy rainbow veils, cloud fleeces, and purple shadows all move in perfect harmony of mass and color.

It quite outstretches the faculty of measurement. At times it is a brooding, terrible thing, unflinchingly real, yet spectral as a dream. I only mention the Canyon because to my own heart and mind it gave me fresh apprehension of depth--but depth only in the natural.

## THE FIRST DEEP

Now let us turn to the meaning of our text as it came to my heart after seeing something of such majestic heights and depths. Deep calleth unto deep! The first deep mentioned, speaks of the unutterable and fathomless depths of the human heart. It is that mysterious, subtle, under-re-gion or ocean floor of man's heart. In the natural he moves about upon the surface and only occasionally is aware of its hidden possibilities. In Proverbs 4:23 we find it is the source from which are the issues of life. It is not the place of manifestation and actual expression, but where issues are born which in time find their way to the surface and come into notice. It is that desperate need incurred by the sin and fall of the whole race in Adam.

What is the character of this strange deep? What could be the nature of such an unexplored and foreboding region? Jeremiah 17:9 tells us it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Jeremiah, even though a prophet, was baffled at the thought of sounding it or telling in detail its workings. It was enough in his estimation to say as he did in the original, "It is desperately sick and incurable." Then he adds, Who can know it?

Dear friends, we may perhaps measure the Grand Canyon and with the scientific instruments of today sound its depth and magnificent dimensions. We are appalled and silenced before such majestic workings of God. Our feeble sense of distance even here is too weak to comprehend--and this is but a little of His handiwork. Could we measure the deep mentioned in the text? No apparatus, however ingeniously constructed, ever finds the hidden springs of the human heart. Thank God, it is not given man to know. Pie has nowhere told us to try so impossible and dispiriting a task.

To begin with, man has not the correct estimation of distance in regard to the depth mentioned here, neither has the honesty of heart to read truthfully even the few feet which at times he finds open to his gaze. My heart takes courage to know there is One who does know. There is One who is able to descend down, down, down, even to the bottom of the heart and there discern the need in all its details, of sin, pain, agony, misery, and want. Such work is left to Him. I am not called upon to venture down into such a hazardous pit. In 1 Chronicles 28:9 we find that "The Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." We find the same truth in Psalm 44:20, 21: "If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; Shall not God search this out? for He knoweth the secrets of the heart." In Psalm 139:1, 2, we find David's testimony: "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off."

Then in the same Psalm David prays, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts." Do you think he prayed this before he had discovered the first shadows and the clouds of darkness over the rim of his own heart? I believe he prayed it after he had been convinced in his own soul that he was not equal to it and no doubt feared the depths hidden there. So in faith and courage (it takes courage) he prayed that God might do the searching.

Maybe some of us have been searching, and feebly and tremblingly trying to descend into this unspeakable and dingy deep, crowded with shadows, mist and haunting sounds. I dare say that all, at times, have ventured over the rim and really meant it as a pious act to convince our hearts that (out of Christ) we are hopelessly undone and altogether miserable. Pungent conviction of the Holy Ghost is most wholesome and conducive to spiritual growth. But I have never yet met a Christian who tried (alone) to descend those depths but that he ended in hopeless, morbid, introspection; and his faith failing him, he became self-centered.

Since God has told us that such work belongs to Him, let us not try to become holier or deeper in God by un-necessary and uncalled for self-humiliation. There are in this deep hidden things--sin, pride, duplicity, unbroken-ness, unyieldedness, self-complacency, weakness, and fear. Only God knows all the unutterable possibilities. Were it not for the grace of God and the life of Jesus, where would any of us be today? I am a firm believer in the total depravity of the natural man. I believe the deep of need found in the human heart (even in each one) holds the possibilities of any sin, no matter how heinous, were one to be placed in an environment needed to foster its growth and the power of the Blood and restraining influence of the Holy Spirit lifted.

This is surely not a pleasant picture. No one delights in rehearsing the failures of the old creation. I mention it only because it is truth, and to rejoice with my fellow-Christians in the revelation of Christ as the mighty Deliverer. Some are afraid we may not know the deformity and desperate need found in this first deep mentioned. They ask if this question is not to be dealt with. Yes, friends, this deep is to be considered; hut with more adequate skill and intelligence of mind than we have. As Christians we now have the mighty Holy Spirit to do this very work for as. Romans 8:27--"And He that searcheth the hearts

knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

I believe that the blessed Holy Spirit, as part of His ministry, comes as a mighty Intercessor for us in behalf of the deep need found in us. We are persuaded that we are unable to cope with it. Only failure and God's grace can bring us to such a commendable position. Then He comes in, and moves down, down, down into those hidden caverns, down into the crevices, and breathless depths, down upon the ocean floor of this unknown deep. There He discerns the need, and clearly and faithfully reads what to us is only a groan or agony. Then with mighty intercession, with groanings which cannot be uttered, He brings those needs before God and prays us through.

Glory to God! Do you wonder that the Spirit prays through us? Since God gave me a revelation (in part, at least) of my heart, I am not surprised that the Holy Spirit was poured through me in groaning and intercession. O friends, let us praise the Holy Spirit for such gracious ministry. Isn't He precious?--the tender, undefiled, dove of God, the delicate, pure, sweet breath of God[ How can He come into this deep? How can He move down into such unspeakable poverty and bring to the surface the need and pray it through? O friends, I do not know. The mystery of godliness is beyond us. But I do know He has come. Hallelujah! If we would yield to Him more He would do more praying and thus do a deeper cleansing.

What is it that issues from this deep? A cry. How long has the cry gone up? Since the beginning. For ages it has come from the broken, bleeding, sinning hearts of mankind, lost, undone, helpless, and needing God. Not only has it come up from the human breast, but the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. Up from this first deep mentioned comes an agonizing cry for God! God! God!! That is the greatest need in the world today. People think they need so many things--better national life, better politics, better social conditions, better schools, better homes, etc. This is only too true, but the deep need of man is God. The blindness of mankind is heart breaking. Too many are playing at life on the surface when they might be living with God where all these needs might be supplied in Him. Life without God is indeed a tragedy.

## THE SECOND DEEP

Now a word as to the second deep mentioned in the text. As we found the first deep that of need in the human heart, so we find the second deep the corresponding supply in the great heart of God. It is the deep, mystical and sublime heart of Jehovah. Who knows its depth? The Psalmist tells us in Psalm 92:5, "O Lord, how great are thy works; and thy thoughts are very deep."

Time or space do not permit us to trace or even suggest the unmeasurable depths of God's love. Even the first ingredient in the nature of God is quite beyond our understanding. The depths of wisdom veiled from the mind of man, the hidden counsels of His heart, the unsounded oceans of His grace, the deep places of His being, shrouded in mystery are only faintly dreamed of by mortal mind. Do you wonder that Paul wrote as he did? When a revelation of His grace came to him, he was overpowered and gazing, as it were, off upon the dim outlines of God's salvation and purposes for man, as he comes into the new creation, he cries, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor?" (Rom. 11:33).

In Eph. 3:18 and 19 Paul tells of the nature of this second deep. "May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which

passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

There is an accompanying hunger on the part of God that He might find expression for His love and an object upon which He might lavish it. We sometimes forget that God has an object in quest. In Deut. 32:9 we read, "For the Lord's portion is His people." This is a strange statement. Could not the God of the universe find satisfaction or delight with the angelic hosts ? with some celestial order of beings? Could not the marvelous display of creative power in matchless order and grandeur fill His heart with satisfaction ? No, friends. We are humiliated to learn that the omnipotent God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, finds peculiar delight in the hearts of His people.

O, how wonderful are the ways of God! Can it be that in my little, cramped, uneventful life God should take pleasure? Yes, dear ones, if we are God's people, we are then His portion which He this very day is seeking. The deep of His heart is calling to the deep in ours. Hallelujah! I saw this afresh in reading the words of Christ, the bleeding Lamb, as He hung upon the cross in dying love, I thirst. How potent with meaning! So simple a word veiled unspeakable soul-thirst on the part of Jesus. I am sure the physical body was fever-worn, and pain-racked and from those parched lips came the cry, I thirst. But let us not read the surface meaning only. He voiced in such a strange and hidden way the real agony of His soul. Indeed He thirsted. But not alone for water, but O, in-finitely more, that the full revelation of His life and death might come even to you and to me. It was the great heart of God "in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

We cannot help but ask, In the face of this deep calleth unto deep, is there no answer? O, friends, can you imagine a call going up from the deep of human need for ages, and then of the call going out continually from the heart of God and think there could be no answer ? Thank God there is no such mockery in His plan. The marvelous scheme of salvation not only includes this strange call of deep unto deep, but it carries also the answer.

The deep of the human heart had not yet learned to call when God shaped that answer. He needed only to speak one word. In order that we as mortals might understand the language of God, when He spoke that word, "it became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, also 14).

The answer which God gives to the call from the deep in us is one word, Jesus, -- That is enough. Is there a call today from some deep place in your life ? Let me tell you again--Jesus is the answer. There can be no need of spirit, soul or body but that one answer may be given--Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Can we ever learn this lesson? Think not that God is ever going to speak another answer. "For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood last" (Psalm 33:9). This is the most costly and marvelous word God ever spoke. It is enough. As a thousand cries go up from our deep, we need only God's answer, Jesus.

Now just a word as to the waterspouts. Did you notice that the waterspouts are the occasion for the calling? A waterspout is a whirlwind out upon the water, raising great masses of it to considerable heights. How this speaks again of the work of the Holy Spirit. In Scripture He is spoken of under the symbols of wind and water. Here it is a strong figure--wind and water both in intense action. This is the mighty movement of the Holy Spirit upon the ocean of our lives. As the mass of water is whirled up into the air an immense vacuum is created. This seeks to be filled as in nature a vacuum always does. Thus we have a call. The deep becomes, as it were, vocal and begins to call to be filled. Has He not swept over your heart-life many a time in a spiritual cyclone and swept out great depths to be filled?

Praise God for the waterspouts! They are only the agents in the hands of an omnipotent God, destined not to destroy but to "make room." And as on the rolling sea the deeps are discovered by this strange phenomenon and the winds rush in to fill the vacuum, so will the Holy Ghost, like a mighty rushing wind, sweep into our troubled hearts and fill the vacancy and yawning deep. At the noise (call) of Thy waterspouts. Many times we think it is a cyclone sent by the devil; or we see the agents only. Thus when our vision is too local we miss the filling because we fail to recognize that the call is from one of His waterspouts.

So, dear ones, may we afresh yield to His working and not only let the call go up from our hearts (voiced, I trust, by the Spirit), but may we take courage in knowing the answer is waiting and will come back in comfort, rest, strength or grace as the deep in our natures may demand. Let us yield, that the surface and the shallowness may be displaced by God's waterspouts, creating within us such depths as shall receive the deep things of God.

So doing, the sea of life is sure to be storm swept, not always smooth as the natural may desire; but let us remember He is Sovereign of the sea and that the life committed to Him is safe.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-follette/deep-calleth-unto-deep/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**