

# Pure Heart and Pure Church

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with God through prayer, devotion, and repentance, and warns against the dangers of sin and neglecting our conscience.*

**Duration:** 1:21:42

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:10-139, Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:23, Revelation 1:17

**Topics:** "Purity"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the state of the church and individuals who are filled with carnality, pride, anger, and secret lust. He emphasizes the need for restoration and the role of God in bringing back joy and healing. The preacher shares personal experiences of starting churches with no resources and relying on prayer and faith. He also highlights the power of hymns and the impact of conviction and repentance in transforming lives. The sermon concludes with a critique of superficial preaching and a call for genuine transformation in the lives of believers.

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## Transcript

I thought about this simple thing this morning, that men's opinions of God change very much in the passing of time. But God's opinion of man never changes. It's established once and forever in his word.

I want us to think about a psalm which is a favorite of mine, the 51st psalm. Just to remind you, there are 150 psalms in the Bible. Sometimes they call it the psalm of the day.

It still is, I believe, the Jewish hymn book. It still gives us the most profound expressions that can be found in song with all our modern singing. No one touches the heights or the depths like the psalmist.

Out of the 150 psalms, roughly half of them, which is 75 in case you don't know, 75 of them were written by David. Of the 75, 18 of them are autobiographical. That is, they all spin around his own experiences.

There are seven penitential psalms. One of them has to be the greatest, and surely it is this 51st psalm. Until fairly recently, I guess some of you will remember anyhow, Leonard Bernstein was the maverick conductor of what, New York Philharmonic Orchestra? Very distinguished, very capable.

He wrote that great mass that was sung at the funeral of Kennedy. And he's a classical pianist in his own right, an exhibitionist. A friend of his was in Europe, and he brought back a dog-eared manuscript, took it to Leonard Bernstein's house.

Incidentally, he lived in the same house where John Lennon was killed outside. But the man said to him, Leonard, play this for me. He looked at the manuscript, he said, I can't.

He said, you can, but you won't. He said, I can't. Why not? This is an old manuscript, it's 200 years old.

I paid an exorbitant price for it in Europe. Again, Leonard looked at it and said, I can't play this, why not? He said, if I could have crept up by the side of the organist as he was working this music out, and I could have caught his spirit, his cadences, his expressions, maybe I could have done it. There's a gap of 200 years from the time he wrote it to now, and all the atmosphere has evaporated.

You know, that's very true about the Word of God too, except the Spirit of God takes it, the letter killers. In case you haven't noticed, this psalm is a monologue. David includes no one else.

How did he say it? How did he write it? He sure didn't dictate it into a machine. I doubt if he had a secretary. In your Bible, it's, I don't know anything about type, Martin is here, he might know what type this is, but it's some kind of type on a white sheet.

It's punctuated with commas and periods. It's written in ink. No, this psalm was written with blood.

It is not punctuated with stops and commas, it's punctuated with groans and tears and agony. You know, if actors were to say their lines like most preachers preach, they'd never get through that audition. They'd be rejected the first time.

Years ago in Scotland, an envious preacher watched the clouds trying to get into a theatre, and every night they were turned away in their hundreds. And he thought about his empty seats in his church Sunday by Sunday. So he made it his problem, his task, to visit the actor, a famous Shakespearean actor.

Maybe Burton that just died was the greatest Shakespearean actor that ever lived. He could quote almost every word that Shakespeare wrote, and he wrote tens of thousands. If you ask Hamlet the second act, he'd quote it like that.

What did Lady Macbeth say so-and-so? He'd quote it, quote it, quote it. He was soaked in Hamlet so that he knew the thing from beginning to end. It was dramatic.

Well, the actor said to the preacher, the reason I packed this place maybe is this, and the reason you don't pack your place maybe is this. I make artificial things look real, and you make real things look artificial. I heard a preacher last Sunday on TV for a few minutes.

He talks as though he's giving a weather report, and bad weather at that. He's about as tasty as uncooked fish, and I don't wonder people turn, when Dave Wilkerson was in Detroit a few weeks ago, amongst all those Muslims and other people on the streets, he asked those kids, lusting, fighting, scarred as they were, smelling evil on their bodies, smelling badly with their breath, he asked them, who is your favorite radio, TV preacher? Time after time he said, we don't listen to them, all they want is our money. Isn't that shocking when kids in the street under the grip of the devil can only say you want our money? How did David recite this thing? I say he punctuated with sobs and commas, not stops and commas, but sobs with grief.

How do I know? Because he's come to God with that which alone is acceptable to God, when we come to him as sinners. Let me say this first, the constitution of the psalm is fascinating as far as I'm concerned. In

verse one, let me say, how he say, what does he say? Have mercy upon me, O God.

He doesn't say, pity me, Lord, I'm in trouble. He doesn't say, excuse me, Lord, I've broken a commandment or two. He comes pleading the only thing that we can plead.

Have mercy upon me, O God. Over here in another psalm of David, 86, he says in verse 5, for thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call unto thee. Verse 15, that thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy and in truth, which is borrowed by David from the 34th chapter in Exodus.

Here is a man who is bowed down in grief. Of course, Shakespeare again, remember Lady Macbeth has a black spot or a blood spot on her hand, and what does she say about it? She says, well, here is, she says, this damp spot, all the perfumes in the radio cannot cleanse it. David has a black spot of murder on one hand, a red spot of murder on one hand, a black spot of adultery on the other hand.

And he comes saying, have mercy upon me, O God. Me, notice that. Have mercy upon me, O God.

According to the multitude of thy tender mercies brought out, my transgressions wash me throughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Against thee only have I sinned. You say, no, he sinned against Bathsheba.

I don't think he did. He sinned with her, but he's making confession here of his own sin. He says, blot out my transgressions.

By real definition, transgression means I acknowledge my rebellion. I acknowledge my disobedience. He hadn't gone into sin ignorantly.

He had been tempted again and again with that woman, and then finally he commits the horrible act of adultery. So, there are three words here for sin. Blot out my transgressions, he says.

Wash me throughly from mine iniquity. Iniquity means I'm perverted because of my transgression. I have let sin come and have dominion over me.

Against thee only have I sinned upon me. Wash me truly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. I acknowledge my transgression, my sin, that to some total of my transgressions and mine iniquity, my sin is ever before me.

What a price men pay for sin. Is he just being poetic? Do you mean he sees his sin every minute of the day? Yes, he does. He looks outside of his castle and there's a young man standing on sentry duty, and every time he sees a soldier, he remembers the young captain he put to death in order that he might steal his wife.

A baby cries back in the kitchen, the baby of one of the girls that works for him, and when he hears the baby's cry, he's haunted with the cry of the sin of the child of thee brought into the world. My sin is ever before me. Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be clear when thou judgest, and be justified when thou speakest.

I was born in sin, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Now there are two theories about the sin of then. One is that we're born with sin, and if somebody says we're born with it, then God sends us to hell for having it.

No, he sends us to hell for not getting rid of it. Are we born with sin, or is this a get-out when somebody says, David here says, I was born in sin, and in sin did my mother conceive me? Remember when Samuel went to anoint the sons of, um, what was his name? Jesse, thank you. Thank you, dear.

Thank you, dear. They all were brought up before Samuel except one. Why wasn't David brought up? Well, the theory is because he was not, he was born out of wedlock, and they didn't want to own him.

In sin did my mother conceive me. Well, whichever view you take, man is still a sinner. If he isn't born with sin, it's soon admitted into his life anyhow.

You know, it's one of the tragedies, I think, of our day that people, when you talk about holiness, they're more afraid of holiness than they are of sinfulness. One of the appalling things in the church and outside of it is our woeful, I would call it woeful, or appalling comfort with sin. I don't often listen to PGL, but very often these nights I get, I go to bed at 10 and I get up at 12, and work till 2 or 3. And the other night, just after 12, I turn on the news, and it slid right into PGL.

And the little boy on PGL, as I call him, was saying some of his wisdom as usual. I know it's when he called people to the altar, they were smiling, one was chewing gum, I saw no broken and contrite hearts. David here is bowed down with guilt, he's lashed with something that has a sting worse than a scorpion.

There's plenty of them around here, if you want to try a scorpion out. I've had them accidentally, and they're very painful. But if it's something that stings him worse than a scorpion, what is that? Conscience.

The old Methodists used to sing a hymn, quicken my conscience till it feel the loathsomeness of sin. There's not much consciousness of sin anymore. The preachers have changed their vocabulary.

There's not much preaching of hellfire on TV. I've heard a preacher saying two or three times, do you know I was at the White House recently? That's the second time I've been. I thought, well, why I'd miss it.

Do you think Obadiah would have invited Elijah to dinner? Do you think Agrippa would have invited the Apostle Paul to dinner? Do you think Herod would have invited John Baptist to dinner? We don't carry eternity with us preachers anymore, as far as I'm concerned. We can step out of giggling in the next room, and come and try to be serious, and somehow we misfire. There is no sense of guilt around anymore.

I'm sure you know this, there are no adulterers anymore. Few people having affairs, of course. No wickedness, just weakness.

No iniquity, just infirmity. Dear Lord, when I read some of these old men that preached a hundred years ago, let me say this. We used to go to a church in Ireland, where my dear wife is from, and the pulpit was on a kind of a stem, and it was only small, not as big as this platform, and right behind it was the door.

Now that church was about 200 years old, and I said, well, why do you have a door right behind a preacher? Well, he needed it to escape when the crowd got hostile. Now we spoon-feed you, and you think, oh he's a nice preacher, he's so nice, he's so smooth, he never hurts me, never says anything that upsets me. Quicken my conscience till it feel the loathsomeness of sin.

The background of this, of course, is extremely dramatic. It's the case of the this man, David. He's got into trouble.

The Philistines have come up to him, and he's terrified. It says in Samuel 28, verse, pardon me, 1 Samuel 28, verse 5. When Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. When Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Then Saul said unto his servant, seek me a woman with a familiar spirit, that I may consider and inquire her. His servant said, there is a woman in Endor. Saul disguised himself.

Notice that? He didn't go in as he, you had to disguise yourself to go somewhere? Are you ever embarrassed to enter a certain place which is questionable? Saul disguised himself and put on a beret, and he went with the two men, and they came to the woman at night. What a lot's done at night. Men love darkness rather than light.

Why? Because their deeds are evil. Why did he disguise himself? Obviously he didn't want to be identified. Why did he go in the night time? He didn't want to be identified.

He came at night and said, I pray the divine unto me by a familiar spirit, and bring him up, whom I shall name unto thee. Oh, so she brought up who? Samuel. When the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice.

I believe it is the only case in history where a genuine spirit was brought up from the other world. Every other is a fake. But notice, she put the spotlight on him.

Why dost thou deceive me, for thou art Saul? That must have been quite a shock. The king said unto her, be not afraid for what thou sawest thou. And the woman said unto Saul, I saw God descending out of the earth.

And he said unto her, what form is he of? And she said, an old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle, the prophet's mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stood with his face to the ground and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, thou hast disquieted me, to bring me up.

And Saul answered, I am so distressed. The Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me. Samuel said, whereof thou dost ask of me, for the Lord is departed from thee.

Isn't that something? Departed from who? From a man who had the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied, but he died of suicide. I heard a man say this week again in that same show, don't you worry, God will never forsake you. It doesn't matter, you may leave him, he won't leave you.

That is entirely against the scripture. If the Spirit troubles you this morning, thank God he's troubling you before you go to hell. The Spirit will leave you? Well, this is what you can do with the Holy Spirit.

Accept him, resist him, grieve him, quench him. Now that's biblical, that's where my theology is. Isn't that right, Brother Parrish? The most miserable man in the world is not the man who's lost a million dollars, or lost his memory, or lost some other thing.

The most miserable man in the world is a man that God has forsaken. Again, I remind you that this King prophesied. The Spirit of the Lord was upon him, he prophesied, but he died of suicide.

He popped his sword up in the ground and fell on it, and he wasn't completely dead. So who killed him off? An Amalekite. Why was he in this trouble with the Philistines? Because God said, God utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

But he didn't destroy them. He kept the best he said for God. He didn't destroy the Amalekites, so the Amalekites destroyed him.

If you don't let God destroy that sin in your life, that sin will destroy you. All the people, I remember preaching in Australia, and the pastor said, you see the man on the right there, that bald-headed man near the back? Yes. Do you know 15 years ago he was the most anointed man in the whole of this vast country? And it is a vast country.

Australia is wider from coast to coast than America is from New York to California. That man had traveled the country and left a blaze of revival behind him, but he trifled with sin. And he was desolate.

He's like a man without a country. Is there anything more desperate than a man without God? The whole highway of Christian living is strewn with has-beens. He has been a great great preacher.

He has been a great authority. Shall I tell you the secret of backsliding? I'm sure you'd like to know. Neglect your devotional life and your prayer life.

No man is greater than his prayer life. I don't care how many he talks to on TV. I had three preachers in my office the other day.

I never mentioned their names. I won't. All asking about the spiritual life.

They thought about two students from one of the best seminaries or cemeteries, if you like, in Dallas. What is the secret of stability? What is the secret of maturity? I tell you, number one, every preacher that comes in my office has three weaknesses. One, he isn't disciplined.

Two, he has almost no prayer life. Three, he doesn't know a thing about worship. No, no, no, that's just where I am.

Well then, before you leave seminary, if you don't want to learn to pray in seminary in any bible school around here, anywhere else, you haven't learned anything as far as I'm concerned. Do you remember when the disciples came to Jesus and said, Lord, teach us to preach? No? What did it say? Oh, I see. Oh, well, it was, it was Paul who said, preach without ceasing.

Which some of us almost do, I think, sometimes. Oh, it was James who said, when you're sick, preach to one another. There's nothing the devil will attack more than your devotional life.

Forget everybody else. God doesn't make us in groups, he makes individuals. There's nobody who could pray at one time like David, and yet here he prays this penitential prayer, praising in agony.

Again, he doesn't say, Lord, I'm at the top of the charts. As you know, I'm right at the top. I mean, people are going down the street, clapping their hands and singing, Saul is saying his thousands and David his tens of thousands.

I'm number one on the charts. Oh, what an amazing man. What an amazing fluctuation in his life.

He wrote some of the most profound songs ever written. You would have to go to Scotland to hear people sing 23rd Psalm. They have about half a dozen tunes to it.

One is called Crimmon. That was born in my days, which is a long way while back. There's an older one, Brother James is there, that has a lovely lilt to it.

They have about five different tunes to the 23rd Psalm. But you would have to go to Wales. Gwen, Gwen isn't here this morning.

She's of Welsh extraction, as we say. I used to love to preach in Wales, oh mercy, how they would sing. And when they got blessed, they'd sing in tongues, the Welsh tongue.

And boy, when they sang there, there was a mouse always came in. I knocked him down my back. Oh, they were so tremendous.

And one great hymn that they sang was this, Great God of wonders, all thy ways display thine attributes divine. But countless acts of pardoning grace above all other wonders shine. Who is a pardoning God like thee? Or who has grace so rich and free? One of the greatest hymn writers ever, I think he wrote more hymns than anyone else, was Charles Wesley.

He put his brother's theology to music. We think sometimes that sinners are just the derelicts. Those that dear David goes, and he's going out again on Tuesday, pray for him, he'll be away two weeks.

Meeting head to head, eyeball to eyeball, as we say, on the streets of Detroit just recently. Crowds of young black Muslims there. People running forward before they can make an altar call.

Kneeling at his feet, holding his feet, weeping at his feet. And he said, Len, do you know that most of my talk to already had an experience of God years ago. I was a Baptist, I was a Pentecostalist.

What are you doing now? Prostituting. I say sin doesn't appear to be sin anymore. The week, two weeks before when he was in New York, they just set up their music, was singing, a bunch of young ladies came around him and said, we love Jesus, Mr. Wilkerson.

You do? Yeah. They live in New York? Well, we weren't born here, we work in here. Where do you work? We're prostitutes.

But we love the Lord. Isn't that something? They can live in their degradation and go to some house of worship and never be broken and contrite, for that's an awesome word that he says later when he says, the sacrifices of God. Now let me step back a minute.

He comes in all his disarray, morally, spiritually bankrupt, morally bankrupt, and he said, thou desirest not sacrifice, oh if I would give it. Well, what way was there to God but sacrifice? They brought the blood of bulls and goats, or doves, or the ashes of an heifer. But he says, thou desirest not sacrifice.

Oh, I'd be glad to bring the whole herd of cattle that I have if thou will, if you'll accept it. But you won't accept it. Why not? Because sacrifice without repentance is useless.

What does he say? Thou desirest not sacrifice, else I will give it. And then he says, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. He mentions spirit three times, just as he mentions sin three times in the first two verses.

And he mentions cleansing three times in different words in the first two verses. He mentions sacrifice three times. He mentions brokenness three times.

He mentions offerings three times. He prays three prayers. He prays the prayer of a sinner, have mercy upon your God.

You know, there was an amazing period in history, in the 1700s. In fact, I gave Melody a little article I'd written a while ago on that period, which maybe will be in the newsletter. I don't know if it's classified for that, but anyhow, it's an amazing period.

Some of the greatest preachers, they lived in the 1600s. All the towering giants like John Owen, and all that bunch of Puritan preachers that have never, never, never been equal. By the way, the second edition of Refiner's Fire is in the press now, so if you do not want one, we've already more than 10,000 orders for it.

You better get it. It's got some tremendous, tremendous stuff in it. Preaching with a punch.

Preaching with authority. The tragedy of modern Christianity is this. We've lost, even in the church, we've lost our sense of the holiness of God.

Come on, be honest. Don't answer all different. Did you come here to meet God this morning, or did you come to hear a sermon about Him? Can you remember the last time you left the sanctuary, and you didn't utter a word for an hour or two? That happened in the Welsh Revival.

I didn't witness it, but I did preach in some of the Revival churches, or churches that have Revival, as late as 1949. There were some old ladies there that came to our meetings and said, these are the most impressive meetings since 1904. I said, well how, how do you gauge that? Because the last four nights, we walked up to the crossroads, and then they turn, and instead of saying good night, they say Nostar.

Nostar. And suddenly realize we walked all the way from the church in the valley up to here. Mrs Griffiths said last night, have you noticed that not one of us has said the word any night this week after the service? Because there's no sense of the majesty of God, we have no sense of the sinfulness of sin.

I've been bowled over for so many mornings this week, between midnight and four o'clock, meditating on a statement that I've read so many times, but it never punched me out like this week. The word of John, when he said, I fell at his feet as dead. I shared it with David the other day, and I said, Dave, how often do we get felled? Stunned.

We come into a gospel meeting as easy as coming to a political meeting and go out as easily. Well I guess you know a year, was it just over a year ago, when David was preaching there at the Agape Force conference in Dallas. He suddenly faded out and fell to the ground, and he said, well then twice, I've had that experience of falling at his feet as dead, and all the glory of heaven has been revealed to me.

When revival comes, that is something which is regular. In recounting the awesome revival, I guess we call it the Shang Tung revival, round the turn of the century, Mrs Jonathan Goldforth says, it was awesome to go to church. You would go in the sanctuary, and we would stand and sing, and sing, and sing, and sing, and then realize we'd been singing for six hours.

We would go another day, somebody would stand up with an anointing in prayer, been waiting on God all night, and burst out with a torrent of revelation. You hardly dare open your eyes, let you saw God in his majesty. You could feel the vibrations of eternity.

One day it was all song and adoration, and we lifted to the third heaven. Next day it was prayer that was awesome. Sometimes it was sobbing, stammering prayer.

It was preachers groaning on the floor. It was preachers that couldn't even get down. Burden with guilt, shame.

There's an old man right now, 95 years of age, in California, and I knew him 50 years ago. He went through that same revival. He said, Len, I know you've given 50 years.

Recently he said to me, you've given more than 50 years in praying for revival. I have about 60 as a matter of fact. But he said, Len, I want to tell you something.

When revival comes, the sewers burst. The man you thought was the most holy man in the district gets up and confesses. It's like opening the valve and letting all the impurity out.

This conviction which has been riding, if you like, in his bosom. Okay. The first day, Mrs. Jonathan Goffold said, it was prayer that was unspeakably glorious.

The next day it was prayer which would tear your eyes out, there wasn't a heart out, there wasn't a single dry eye. Everybody groaned in the spirit. The third day she said, not necessarily in this order.

You would go. And whereas we had sung for six hours or prayed for six, the next day the whole congregation, two or three thousand people would sit, and from morning till night, not a word was uttered. And she said, that was the most awesome of all.

Beyond the awesomeness of singing or the awesomeness of the stillness, be still and know that I am God. The doctor told you to say, Len, you've got to keep this in mind. As Christians, we're activists.

We think if we work through morning till night and tumble into bed exhausted, we've served God. Not necessarily. I believe if you win a hundred people an hour to God, it doesn't necessarily satisfy the heart of Jesus.

What is the first and greatest commandment, dear missionary? Know thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength. And if you love him, you would serve him. It's the key to the whole thing.

David had loved God, and he'd known the mercy of God. He'd known the power of God. Can you imagine him laid back, as we say, on a hillside, the stars twinkling, and he had his guitar.

No, guitars are backslidden harps. He had a harp, and there he's playing his harp. And what's he doing? He's singing, when the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork.

I read a statement this week made by, I think, an old Puritan, when he said the most amazing thing in English prose is the 40th chapter of Isaiah, and I've read that over and over and over and over again. He said in that 40th chapter that God, he says, lift up your eyes and behold the host of the heavens. He calleth every star by name.

If I had some, I won't put it there, but let me say this. If you put a one there, and then you put 23 zeros behind it, those are broken down zeros, but anyhow, that's a sextillion. A sextillion is one with 23 zeros behind it.

And the scientists say there were 40 sextillions of stars. Now, in England and Germany, a sextillion is a one with 36 zeros behind it. But then I read more recently that there are estimated 50 billion stars in the Milky Way alone.

You know that shaft of light you see in the sky sometimes? 50 billion, and he calls them all by name. Isn't that beautiful? Isaac Waltz has a hymn in which he says he made the stars those heavenly flames. He counts their numbers, calls their names.

His wisdom's vast and knows no bound, a deep where all our thoughts are drowned. What is a creature's skill or force? The spiteful man, the warlike horse, the piercing wit, the active limb, all are too mean delights for him. But saints are lovely in his sight.

I don't think God gets fellowships with stars, or a beautiful countryside, or the Rocky Mountains. He fellowships with individuals. Now, David has had a marvellous relationship with God.

Okay, let's see him there with his harp again, singing that marvellous 23rd Psalm, as only he could sing it. It must have been wonderful. I wish there was a recording of it.

The Lord's my shepherd, I shall not want, so forth. You can turn that round, work on it. They're all in metres, the Psalms.

Or get a Presbyterian psalm book, or get a Presbyterian psalm book. And all the Psalms at the back are in metres. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want, he makes me down to lie.

In pastures green he leadeth me, the quiet waters by. Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me, and in God's house forevermore my dwelling place shall be. It's beautiful.

He writes the 23rd Psalm, he sings it, but he's in a different situation from when he said, when he wrote this psalm. He says, Thou didst not sacrifice that I would give it. The sacrifice of God out of broken spirit.

What else does he say? In verse 8, make me to hear joy and gladness for the bones which thou hast broken. He hasn't got a broken bone in his body. He's using a figure of speech.

In 1951, I jumped out of a burning hotel. We had had two weeks of revival in Dr. Salter's church, which he said were the best revival in 25 years. I had a prayer partner.

He hadn't been to bed for five nights. Dear old Tom Hare. Tremendous man of intercession.

We went to bed on the Friday night, suddenly Saturday night. About half past two, I heard fire, fire, fire. I thought, well, oh dear, this is terrible.

Somebody had a building on fire and it's snow outside. Wouldn't be where I was, of course. I mean, how would the church go on if I died? Incredible.

Surely, that couldn't happen. When I die, the world will stop, or the church will, surely. I mean, you know, I've put so much into it.

Well, it happened to be that I was in the frying pan. The hotel we were in was burning. A few weeks ago, a boy died from a 30-foot tower in the Olympics.

Somebody said to him, how high is the tower? He said, from the ground up 30 feet. Went at the top looking down 300 feet. I was 30 feet up in that hotel and I looked down in the middle of the night.

There's the floor down there. People shouting, jump. I thought, yeah, that's fine.

No problem jumping. You're putting the brakes on when you get really to the bottom. But I landed on my heels, crushed my feet, what do you call the oscalsis, the heels, crushed like fine sugar, the doctor said.

My leg was in three pieces, three breaks in my back, both my feet broken. I'm lying in the gutter outside the hotel and a guy comes around the corner and says, what are you doing here? Well, obviously playing tennis, aren't I? He said, you can't stay here. I said, I don't want to.

Get up and go away. I said, I can't, my back's broken, my legs are broken, my feet are broken. Oh, I don't think it's so bad.

I said, well, I do. Well, he said, listen, you can't stay here, so listen to this humour. Something will come around the corner and run over you and get hurt.

That's all I need. Let me put you over there. No, no, please don't lift me.

He put his hand under my legs here and my back and, you know, when he did, all those bones just screamed up and gracious man, he laid me in about 18 inches of snow. I wasn't ready for refrigeration. I didn't want to stay there.

I soon began to shake and quiver. But, you know, I'll tell you what I learned. I got this psalm, which meant a lot of difference since then.

When I got all those bones broken and there was no healing for a long while, well, impossible to tell. And David says, when I'm out of relationship with God, I'm full of broken bones and there's no way that they can be healed. He says, a broken and a contrite heart thou will not despise.

A broken heart, a contrite heart, a grieving heart, a heart that's restless. He's not finding some temporary antidote. He wants that relationship that he had with God to be restored.

Now, look at the difference in the psalms. 23rd Psalm, calm and beautiful. In this psalm, he's like a boy that's, to use a very simple, weak argument, like a little boy caught with his hand in the cookie jar.

Here he is loathsome in the sight of God. But the hymn quickens my conscience till it is the loathsomeness of sin. There are no mild cases of sin, any more than any mild cases of cancer.

They're all deadly. What does he do in this psalm? He says, hide thy face, ease of holy horizon, to behold iniquity. How do you feel God thinks about the average congregation in our churches today, where sin doesn't matter anymore? Full of adulterers and divorced people, and all kinds of crimes that have been done.

There's no preaching against sin. Oh, once God exposes his light on human corruption, and only then do men cringe and howl for deliverance. Realize they've got leprosy, worse than leprosy, worse than cancer

in their breaths.

David here says, hide thy face from my sins. Do you remember the 139th Psalm, when he said, one of the bravest things I think ever written by man. He said to God, search me, O God, and know my heart.

Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way. That was when he was living as close to God as he ever lived, or maybe anybody else ever lived. He did not fear the searching eyes of God.

He hadn't broken the commandments of God. He was walking in total obedience. But here he said, hide thy face from my sins.

Don't come with the searching eyes. And all him said, search me, O God, like he is talking about himself. Search me, O God, my actions try, and let my life appear as seen by thine all-searching eye, to my eyes thy ways make clear.

Search all my thoughts, the secret springs, the motives that control, the chambers where polluted things hold empire of the soul. Search till thy fiery glance hath cast its holy light through all, and I by grace am brought at last before thy face to fall. Search me, O God.

I believe a normal Christian life is a life of holiness. It's easy to sing that hymn holy, and by the way, melody there. I've heard that hymn sung around the world.

You can't sing it without moving me to tears. I didn't go to the concert last night. I did something better.

I prayed for them. We never sang that hymn with more delight and rapture than when Keith Green thumped it out on that piano in Brown's house. We didn't have to sing.

He had his own interpretation. He put additional words, additional notes into it. I've heard people comment about that.

Oh, I remember, a lady came from Arkansas one night. The meetings we've been having down there in the last days, which we're going to start the last week of this month, are all being well. You know, people have come from Mobile, 700 miles to come to a prayer meeting.

You know, two lords of them come every Friday night from Oral Roberts University and say, why don't we have a prayer meeting like that? I said, ask the Oral. You know, they come from seminaries. Isn't it a shame that people have to drive four, five, six hundred miles to a meeting that's solely given to prayer? Two seminary students in my office the other day and I said, what seminary go to? They told me.

What church to go to? I go to so-and-so. Oh, I go to another one. Oh, I said, your church has 26,000 members.

How many come to the prayer meeting? We don't have a prayer meeting. I said, that's like me saying, give you my Cadillac. It was given to me, but I'm not giving it to you.

But it's like me giving you the Cadillac and say, take it, friend. There's only one thing wrong with it. What is it? It has no mortar in it.

A church without a prayer meeting has no mortar. There is no more precious thing in the whole world as I've preached in some of the greatest churches in the world. Preach with some of the greatest preachers

and pray with some of the finest men I've ever met.

Sometimes people say, you've talked about prayer this week. Can we have a prayer meeting? Yeah, we'll have it Friday night after the meeting. Tell all the preachers in town to come and all the deacons and all the other needy folk.

Bring them to a prayer meeting. All this section is reserved for preachers. We're not down on our knees 10 minutes, but what they get up and action speak louder than words.

They're not used to praying. Five minutes on their knees, hmm? What was it, something we heard the other day, Martha, somebody was given what, 30? What was it? A period of time for what was it? I've forgotten. Something was said in news.

Well, one thing that was said in the news was that some of the athletes in the Olympics had trained for eight years, some of them just to run for a matter of seconds down the track. One of the girls on the basketball team was asked, don't you have to discipline yourself? Yes. Do you practice a lot? Yeah, six to eight hours every day, six days a week.

Doesn't it involve sacrifice? Yeah. You have to leave home? Yeah. What else? Oh, this girl said, I haven't seen my boyfriend for nine months.

Supposing you tell our students on our campuses, you can't go home for nine months. Boy, they cry their eyes out. You have to discipline yourself for six to eight hours every day in the presence of God.

Remember, those gold medals are already tarnished. They asked one young fella, what are you going to do with the gold medal? Do you know what he said? Have it bronzed. It shows the value we've put on it, but that's all it's worth.

Paul says they do it for a corruptible crowd. Remember, the Olympics were there 400 years before Christ was born, and they were more strenuous than even they are today. They didn't have vitamins and all the other things that we have.

But getting back to it, we're living in a day when there's little, if any, discipline. Come on, go to bed at the same time every night. Get up the same time every morning.

Take time to be holy. Forget your friends. If they want to be skeletons spiritually, let them be skeletons.

If they want to be poor spiritually, let them be poor. You're not going to be judged for their lives, you're going to be judged for your life. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

He uses different words here now. Blot out my transgressions. Blot out means like, here, I erase this thing here.

It's completely gone. There you are. Now it's gone.

Okay. That's what the word blot means. To blot out means to erase.

Wash me. If you've been in oriental countries, you've seen people, women, go down to the river. They put clothes in the river, and then they put them down, and they tramp them out.

They're tramping the dirt out. And that's exactly what that Hebrew word wash means there. Trample me.

If need be, crush me to get this thing out of me. Then he uses an amazing word, cleanse me. There was a great Hebrew scholar years ago, some of you must have read, he has two great volumes, Dr. Eidersheim on Eidersheim's study of the life of Christ.

It's the greatest classic ever. You can still buy it. Dr. Eidersheim, a Hebrew scholar, says you cannot translate this word cleanse into English except this way.

You can see that I thought, unfin me. Isn't that beautiful? Cut me loose away from my sin. I say again, the normal Christian life is a life of holiness.

We like to sing holy, holy, holy, and then we go on and sing toward the end, Lord holy, only thou art holy. That's not what the scripture says. Holiness originates with God.

Only he is originally holy. He always was and always will be everlastingly holy. Our holiness is borrowed from him.

The command is to be holy, which literally means be healthy in your spirit. That's why the word holy comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word, halig, which means health. Or again, it means purity.

There used to be a great preacher in England, of course there have been a lot of great preachers in England, but anyhow, this old preacher used to preach in Westley's Chapel on City Road, London. Mercy for the lack of me, I can't think of his name at the moment. He wrote a great book called The Burning Cataracts of Christ.

I remember his phrase, he said, the man that only wants his sins forgiven is toying with religion. The aspirations of the human heart, naturally, I mean when God has come to deal with them, is as David cries here, create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right spirit within me. And then he says in the 12th verse, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.

Let me give you one of my latest quips. The more joy you have in the Lord, the less entertainment you need. Entertainment is the devil's substitute for joy.

And there's a king in America, do you know who the king is, the queen? The king is sport and his wife is called entertainment. And they're devouring, not only the man in the street, they're devouring people in the pews, they're devouring preachers. Ask your preacher, what time do you go to bed at night? If he says it's none of your business, say it is, I want to know what kind of a man you are.

Ask him what kind of a prayer life he had. I don't ask people if they're saved anymore. Who isn't saved? From the white house to the jailhouse.

I look a person in the eye, I say, does Christ live in you? I was saved in, I didn't ask you that. I'm asking you, does Christ live in you? Christianity is the only religion in the world where a man's God comes and lives inside of him. A Chinese scholar was given a copy of the New Testament.

He'd read the Quran, he'd read the Vedas, and all the sacred books. The man said to him, did you read the New Testament through? He said, I did. What's the most amazing thing? He thought the man would say the most amazing thing I read was that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin.

That he died and physically rose again from the dead. Instead of that, he said, the most awesome thing is in Philippians chapter 2, or Ephesians chapter 2. It is? Yes. It says, in time past he walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.

And then at the end of that same chapter, it says you're the habitation of God. He said, sir, does your God live inside of you? If so, that's the most awesome thing I've read. I've read the Quran, I've read the Vedas, I've read all those other sacred books.

But I've never read where a man's God comes and makes the man the habitation of God. I preached in a big church a few years back. I said, Martha, dearie, those trees at the entrance of the church are wonderful.

Never seen trees like that in my life. I know what the leaves are, but look at all the little white flowers, white buds. Well, I got to church a bit late one night.

Well, I mean late for me. I usually like to get there half an hour before time. As I went in here with the boys, you know, while I draw this fleeting breath.

And then sticking the cigarette stumps in the trees outside. When I gave out my text, I said, gentlemen, I'm going to preach this tonight. I did, on Roman day.

And while you're looking for it, get out your cigarettes and your matches. You can all smoke. What? Deacons nudging each other.

We knew this guy was a crank. I said, smoke. This building isn't the temple of God.

This is the temple of God. You defile it, till you go up to the door of the church, defile it inside. Of course, if you start smoking, I'll tell you to stop.

But I said, this is a temple. He doesn't dwell in temples, mate. He dwells in a habitation.

What? Full of carnality, full of guillotine, full of pride, full of anger, full of secret lust. David says, restore unto me the joy of enough pain. The bonds that you've got, this relationship that you severed.

The only way that I can get my joy back is for God to come in full control. First, you have to cleanse the habitation in which he's going to live. 1937 was a great year in my life.

I met my sweet wife in a town called Eccles, outside of Manchester, England. We took a tent there. We didn't know anybody.

It was our usual format. Take a tent to a city, no backing, no churches, no money, sleep in it, play in it, weep in it, groan in it. And figured in six weeks we could raise a church of four to five hundred people, or even sometimes eight hundred.

And we did. And those churches are still standing now, fifty years after. We had no money, we had no backing.

We lived like mice. We ate as little as we could, because we had to. Slept as little as we could, prayed as much as we could.

We went to Eccles. Martha came in with a bunch of other nurses. They always looked so beautiful, all sitting in rows, you know.

And they wore white dresses and a blue cape with a red lining. And the smart girls would throw the red over their shoulder, you know, to be more attractive and distract you while you were preaching. But anyhow, nearly all the boys fell in love with the nurse.

One of them fell in love with Martha. I believe I, I believe I love Miss Wilson, and I want to, I want to marry her. Can I go see her tomorrow night? I said, sure.

I said, before you go, I want to tell you, I'm going to marry her. Oh, well, I won't have any chance. I said, well, I won't say a word to her.

Well, I got the pride, and she's been a very wonderful, wonderful wife. But on the Friday night, one Friday night, one Saturday night, I preached on Psalm 51. There was a woman sitting at the back.

I've seen some ugly women in my life, but she was the ugliest woman I'd ever seen. As I say, she had a nose like a banana, and she was as wrinkled as a prune. She was dressed in black, and she was sallow.

And at the end, I said, if you have some need to meet God, if you've a broken and contrite heart, you're welcome to come and kneel here. I'll pray with you. The others all left the tent.

She came and knelt there. And she sobbed, and she cried, and she groaned. Finally, I said, well, ladies, it's time to do everything, and it's time to quit crying.

It's time to talk to God. Well, I said, what's your problem? She said, Mr. Regnall, 40 years ago, I was one of the leading officers in the Salvation Army. One night, I quarreled with my partner.

There were always two women in one area and two men in another, leading a corps, as they called it, what we would call a fellowship. We argued that night, and I got angry. I went home.

I took off my straw bonnet. I tore it up and put it on the open fire. I took off my tunic and cut it up and put it on the open fire.

I took off my skirt, cut it up and put it on the open fire. I stirred it all up. And I took my Bible and ripped all the pages out, put it on top.

And she said, Mr. Regnall. She began to smile a little. She said, it's so wonderful tonight.

I said, well, it was a wonderful preaching. I've had a better time many times. No, no, no.

I heard the voice of God the first time for 40 years. After I severed my relationship with him, I heard William Boole, the founder of the Salvation Army, preach as only he could preach. I heard Colonel Brangle.

I heard all the so-called great stars. But she said, for 40 years God has never spoken to me. I've had a heart of stone.

I've been to services. I've never been moved. Hymns don't move me.

Preaching doesn't move me. Threatening doesn't move me. And she said, tonight as you spoke there and said, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.

I said, God, that's the only thing I need in life. I don't ask to live longer. I don't ask you to ease my poverty. I don't ask to pray. I ask you to restore. She said, you see, I knew the intimacy of walking with God. I had a love relationship with him. I could really say personally, he walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me. And it's gone. I said, well, lady, 40 years of wasted life. I said, well, he can't give you that back. He can restore your peace. He can restore your joy. He can bring you into a living, flaming relationship with himself. You can trample beneath your feet the world, the flesh and the devil, but it's not going to bring 40 years of wasted life. Do you know after that, that woman, every time we opened the house of God, she was the first at the door. We had a prayer meeting every Sunday morning at seven o'clock. And I've seen her standing there in the snow, shivering, her clothes were very thin. And she would say, Mr. Ray, this is a lovely morning. Her name was Shepherd. I said, well, Mrs. Shepherd, it's not much of a morning for you. You're shivering, it's cold, it's icy, oh, but Mr. Ray, look, I have my joy. I have my peace. The love relationship is restored. My whole world is a new world. Dear old Duncan Campbell, I've prayed with him. You met Duncan, prayed with him many times. He used to pray at five in the morning. He couldn't pray until he had tea made as black as your shoe. He could almost stand up the spoon up in it. I couldn't drink it like that. I told him it was Mobil oil. But once he got anointed with his tea, he got going. Oh, how he used to pray. Oh, when he told me about the revival in the heavenly, Brother Duncan, please. You make me feel as though God has slighted me. You make me feel as though, oh, what's it going to say? I preached around the world. I preached to thousands. Oh, forget it. I never seen any brokenness like they saw. Never seen that a moving of the spirit of God like he saw. Oh, how he used to say, there's only one sin that God cannot forgive, and that's the sin that's unconfessed. If we confess our sin, it's not a nice thing to be humiliated. You know, I can remember the old days, this precious lady, DeRancho, when you went to a holiness meeting or a Pentecostal meeting, do you know what? There were more people at the altar before the service than after. The altar was lined with people praying the glory down. We were an old man who used to thunder out every night. Now, Lord, you come and walk in our midst tonight. And I was a kid about 12 and I was saying, don't. I thought God was going to come down in his glory, you know, and I'd be running for the door. You know, we say, come Lord, you come. If the Lord came to the average church, there'd be chaos in the choir and panic in the pews and the deacons would be running for the door.

We don't know the glory of God, but I'll tell you what, I believe it's going to come back. It's going to come back. We're going to discover a majesty in God that we've never, never, ever known before.

And with the glory, the revealed light of God, there's going to come a consciousness of sin such as never known before. Just one thing. Somebody sent me some little books recently from Ireland.

They're life stories of famous people at Briggs. One of them is about Jerry McCauley. He was an Irishman who came to Boston.

He broke all records for drinking, violence, everything else. Ended up in jail. If I remember, was in Sing Sing.

That's a name for a jail who sings in Sing Sing. Spent about 15 years there, but met God there. Came out into New York.

There's a famous street there just over Brooklyn Bridge on Canal Street. There's a famous building called the Water Street Mission. There were more derelicts and reprobates and sinners and criminals converted there than any place in America.

And Jerry, I believe, got saved there, and then he started a place of his own. But you know, he had a passion for the lost. My dear Dave Wilkerson, he could stay in his nice home.

What do you want to go meet? Take a risk of being hit and stand amidst all the abuse and sin and uncleanness. But where did Jesus go preach? You don't go fishing in your bathtub, do you? If you do, you need to check with a doctor. You go where the fish are.

We sit in pretty churches. I'll tell you what, I worked 20 years ago with Dave Wilkerson when Teen Challenge was first starting in New York. There's one thing about those guys, you didn't have to tell them they were sinners, they knew.

You had to tell them you had an answer. There's a lovely hymn written in America. Not many great hymns written in America.

One great hymn written in America that I love. We used to sing it in England, I admit that. It was written by H. G. Stafford, a very wealthy man.

He had four beautiful daughters. He waved them goodbye and the ship called the Le Havre from Pier 90 in New York. Before the ship got to England, it sank off the rugged coast of Wales.

His four daughters perished. His wife would stay. They sent him news to New York, sitting at his desk in his office.

Wealthy, wealthy, wealthy man. The ship has gone down, your four daughters are lost. He got a piece of paper and he wrote, when peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my Lord thou hast taught me to say, it is well with my soul.

The second stanza says, if Satan should buffet, if trials should... but the third stanza. I stopped a meeting in the great Baptist church in Atlanta about four years ago, on the Friday night. I said, look, everybody stand please, sing this hymn.

Sing very carefully the third stanza. My sin, not my sins, that's the fruit. My sin, that's the root.

Oh, the bliss of this glorious thought. My sin, not in part, but the whole is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more. On the Sunday night, Dr. Stanley stood on the platform.

He said, I don't know what happened, but as we sang Friday night, Brother Amiel said, look at the third verse. Something snapped inside of me. A deacon came to me.

He said, Brother Amiel, what happened to Dr. Stanley happened to me Friday night. He said, I told my friend at the door, another deacon, he said, the same thing happened to me. I wanted God to deal with that root of sin, the very fountain of rebellion and uncleanness.

There are no degrees of purity, no degrees of death. There are degrees of life, there aren't degrees of death, there are no degrees of purity. Your heart and mine is either pure or impure.

And if it's impure, it's an offense to God. If I'm harboring grudges, if I have pride, if I have... There is no other message in the world like the gospel. It's a mandate to go to the derelicts, to anybody.

This psalm always reminds me of this, Hebrews 7.25. He's able to save to the uttermost, and somebody said to the muttermost, and to the uppermost, and to the guttermost. There's no such thing as such a chronic condition of sin that God cannot cleanse that heart. He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Again, I say the normal condition of the Christian life is a life of wholeness. He says, create in me a clean heart, and give me thy Holy Spirit. When Saul, the king of Israel, had an evil spirit, he did evil things.

When a man has an unclean spirit, he does unclean things. When a man has the Holy Spirit, he produces holy things. You know, if Jesus could have solved ten million arguments, if he just said one, change one word.

If Jesus had said, by their gifts ye shall know them, it would have killed ten million arguments. But he didn't say that. He said, by their fruit ye shall know them.

Gifts, I don't belittle them, who would? They're wonderful. There are many of them. But you never saw fruit strutting, did you? People strut with gifts very often.

Fruit is noiseless in its production, noiseless in its purity, in its progress. And that's what God wants in our lives. My sin, not in part, but the whole is nails of the cross.

In other words, when he died there, I died with him. Taking this illustration, here it is. Here's a man standing up in the water of baptism.

He goes down under the water. As soon as he goes under, he's cut off from the world above, isn't he? He can't see it, he can't touch it, he can't smell it, can't sense it. Immediately he goes under that water.

It's symbolic of the fact that he's been buried with Christ, therefore the world above has no fascination for it. Paul says, I'm crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Not only that, but at the end of Galatians 5 he says, and the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Now you've seen a lot of things. Some of you men that went to war saw some bloody things on battlefields, dismembered bodies. None of us ever saw crucifixion.

Five, ten thousand people would follow a man carrying his cross. As Dr. Chaucer said, if you saw a man taking his cross outside of the city, you were sure of one thing, he wasn't coming back. Once he went there, you could throw rotten fruit at him, rotten eggs at him, rocks at him, filth poured on him.

Five thousand people there at night to see that man crucified. Six o'clock in the morning, not one of them there. The first to be there were the vultures that came on the cross there, and stood there, and pecked out his eye, and pecked out his body, until his ancestors were hanging out.

Then the dogs came and licked up the blood. There's nothing more horrible than an area of crucifixion, with all those skeletons, dismembered bodies there. Paul said, the world is crucified.

Is it? Come on now, is the sports world as ugly to you since you would say that it still nationalizes you? Do you spend more time watching ball games on TV than prayer? If so, that's your God, that's your rival. The world is crucified. Even the fascinating world of business, maybe, with all its allurements to profits and success, it's crucified to me.

And not only that, I'm crucified to the world. They said of Paul, here's a man with the most colossal intellect in the world. He taught with the Epicureans, and Stoics, and poets, and others in what, the 16th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and they marveled that he knew so much.

He counted philosophy with philosophy, history with history, poetry with poetry, and then finally, as Dr. Stuart of Scotland said, he showed them, he founded the trumpet blast of the resurrection. What? A man once died and rose again? Yeah, you have to see Dr. Scotland. You see, we're not saved by the death of Christ.

We're saved by his life. If he's still dead, we're still dead. Buddha didn't die and rise again.

Confucius didn't die and rise again. But Paul says, I'm an idiot to the world. Think of what that man could be doing in the world.

He could be the greatest philosopher, greatest in Socrates, greatest orator than Demosthenes, and here he is huddled up with a bunch of people that have prayer meetings in back rooms. Look at his face, all scarred with stones. Notice he limps.

He's been in prisons more than any criminal. Are those the wages this glorious God gives you? Of course, he'd never heard, you know, of name it and claim it. That was his fault.

All he knew was prisons and persecutions and hardship. And you know what he did? The poor insane man, this is what he said, you know, I'm glad God's given me grace to get through it at night. If it were 25 hours in the day, I'd never have made it.

Well, I pray this morning, Lord, keep me from temptation, keep me from difficulties, and make me a jellyfish. You know what he says? I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in reproaches. Come on, have you got so far? When your name is cast out as an evil thing, when you're ridiculed and despised.

You see, once the heart is cleansed and the Holy Spirit of God comes to control, makes all the difference in the world, it's no longer I, it's Christ that lives in me. The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the

faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. There is no joy in the world like the joy of God.

And the man who wrote most about it was writing in a stinking lousy prison cell. And he says, listen, I've got a word from God for you. Oh, you have? What is it? We're going to make my money? No, he says, rejoice in the Lord.

They should have been writing to him, he's writing to them. He hasn't had a square meal, he hasn't had a bath for weeks, a month, maybe years. And here he is rejoicing in adversity, in tribulation, in distresses, in reproaches.

Everything that we shun, everything that would make character in us, make us strong, make us tough for God. Well, have you got that joy? Can we glory in necessities, in reproaches? I'm going to ask you to sing. I don't know whether our choirmasters can strike this up in the right place.

Maybe you will. Okay, 139, 139. Let's sing the first stanza.

I think it's the third. The first and the third, let's stand and sing. When peace like a river attendeth my way.

Can you do it? Can you teach it? First and third, yeah. When peace like a river, when joy speaks in those roads, quiet down in this world, in this world. My Savior, like David, he brought me apart of a horrible pit.

And something even greater than that, you saved us from an eternal pit. You brought us out of darkness into light. And so we shall never go into eternal darkness.

We thank you this morning for truth in the midst of a world that's staggering and stumbling over error. We thank you for light in the midst of darkness. We thank you for life in the midst of death.

God, we ask thee that we may crave this purity of heart, be willing to let you dissect us and show us ourselves, horrid as it may be, to show us the secret corruption, the vileness, the sin, the secret lusts that hold empire over our souls. We thank you the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, can cleanse us from sin, and not only that, keep us from sin. He's able to save.

We thank you for every voice which is a truthful voice in the world this morning. Think of all the missionaries. Think of our precious brothers and sisters in Russia, or China, or other countries that maybe haven't been to a fellowship for years, and yet maintain their integrity.

And they can truly say what is poetry to us, though he slay me, yet will I trust him. God make us like the Bereans, to be noble. Let there be distinctiveness about us, the distinction of holiness, of spiritual health, and life, and power.

We pray for all the ministries around, and ask you to duplicate their power, strengthen all the branches that they have across the world. Keep us looking to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. And may we be able to say, like the Apostle, that we finished our course with joy.

I give you praise in Jesus' name. Thank you. Bless you.

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