

Evidences of the New Birth - Part 5

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon explains the five phases of God's operation on the human heart, leading to the witness of the Spirit, which is the reality of the believer's new birth.

Duration: 50:54

Scripture: 1 John 2:3

Topics: "New Birth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of understanding and experiencing the message of God. He references Galatians 4:4-6, emphasizing that God sent His Son to redeem those under the law and adopt them as His children. The speaker then discusses three evidences of a true believer: their attitude towards God's commandments, their attitude towards the world, and their practice of sin. He challenges the listeners to examine their hearts and consider their relationship with God and their understanding of themselves and Christ.

Transcript

I told you over the last 15 years, but his brother got up and says, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our speaker for the last time. Will you turn to 1 John, please? Now, you notice the five words or statements on the board. If you don't have them, I suggest that you copy them or make note of them somewhere.

These are steps or phases of the divine operation when God would bring someone out of death into life. I repeat again, because probably sometime in the next 12 months I'm going to give you a test on this, whether you remembered it or not. There isn't enough to pray that someone be saved.

That is, of course, a very worthwhile, very important prayer. But there are phases of God's operation on the human heart in bringing people out of death into life. The first phase is awakening, when God the Holy Spirit broods over the heart, as in Genesis, the first chapter, it's described that he brooded over the world.

The world was said to be without form and void. Darkness covered the face of the deep. What a beautiful or horrible or true picture that is of the human heart.

The God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ could shine unto them. So the first thing that God does in this fact is to say, Light be, and there's an awakening. The second is conviction, when through the proper application of the truth, the heart of the

individual is changed from that which has characterized it.

Because you see, sinners are traitors, are rebels, are anarchists, transgressors, and enemies. Those are all words the Bible used to describe the heart of the person outside of Christ. He's a traitor against just and proper government.

He's a rebel against authority. He's an anarchist with no government but his own whim. He's a transgressor when God's law and the rights of others get in the way.

They're quickly torn down, fences are knocked over, lines crossed. And he is an enemy because the carnal mind is enmity against God. So that's a description of the human heart.

Now, when God awakens, then he has to convict, and that's through the right application of the law, the revelation of the moral character of God. And that, applied to the conscience, applied to the mind, causes a process of conviction. That issues when, in conviction, the sinner takes sides with God against himself.

Up till that time, he's been defying God. But now it's expressed by the public in front of the door of the temple, will God be merciful to me, a sinner, convicted. Those of us that have done some evangelism in prisons are always astonished to find how horribly inequitable the jurisprudence and justice system of our country is.

Because you talk to the people behind the bars, and probably not more than one out of a hundred is there guilty. All the rest are as innocent as can be. I know, absolutely, they told me so, they're innocent.

But it's such a relief to find someone, why are you here, because I deserve to be here. Oh, you know, I mean, you just can't get over it. That's conviction.

And then there's a third phase of repentance. The essence of the crime is, I'll do what I want to do. Evidence of repentance is, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? A change, recognizing the authority of God has no merit in it, doesn't give any merit for forgiveness of past sins.

Repentance has only to do with a changed attitude on the part of the culprit. I am guilty, I deserve God's judgment and justice, but I have changed my mind about the crime of pleasing myself. Repentance.

And then that issues, when God sees that there is repentance, then he quickens in the heart faith. Oh, there may have been intellectual acceptance of what the Scripture said all the time, but there's a difference between intellectually agreeing with what the Bible says and faith that savingly applies it to one's own heart. Saving faith.

I know not how, you've sung it so often, I know not how this saving faith to me he did impart, or how believing in his word wrought peace within my heart. There's a difference between a head faith and a heart faith. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

Many, many people have intellectually accepted what the Scripture says is true and presume, therefore, that they are Christians. And they've been encouraged so to do. Do you believe that? Okay, now what's that mean? That means you're saved.

Just that little argument is enough to sometimes absolutely short-circuit the work that God is doing in the heart. Just because I believe it's true here does not mean it's true here. I have to believe it's true here before I can appropriate it and have it become true here.

I have to see the difference. Look, they look alike, don't they? Both have five digits. But do you know the difference between the right hand and the left hand? I hope so.

They're headed in different directions. That's what's the difference. Very true, indeed it is.

But you've got to know the difference between them. And you've got to know the difference between head faith and heart faith. Head faith says that's so.

Heart faith says that's so in me. I can believe many things are true in the Scripture, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're true in me. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

Saving faith. And then on the basis of that saving faith is the witness of the Spirit. Now the reason I told you that is because that's the point we're coming to today.

Now I want to go back to 1 John, the first chapter, so that you'll understand why this little letter was written. In verse 3, that which John says, that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. So that's the purpose.

And I'm saying that many times people will come to you and say, I'm not sure I'm saved. I'm not sure I'm a Christian. What are you going to do in such case? Well, the thing for you to do is to bring them to the Scripture as the x-ray machine, and let the Spirit of God put the power on to divide the soul and the spirit, and thus they will see what's in their own hearts.

Don't presume to tell anybody that they're a Christian. The Lord knoweth them that are His. But I don't, and you don't.

But how can we help them? Bring them up against the x-ray machine. And we've given you the several for you that are here for the first time. The first evidence of regeneration is found in chapter 1, verse 6. If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

The second evidence of regeneration is found in chapter 2, verses 3, 4, and 5. Hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. So, how do you walk, my dear? What does your walk change? What's your attitude toward the commandments? Do you want to please do what God has commanded you to do? He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. The third evidence is found in chapter 2, verses 15, 16, and 17.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. What is your attitude toward the world? And then you have to describe the world, something of what it is.

And the difference is this. It's not how much you have of it, but it's how much it has you. From whence comes your happiness? Then the fourth evidence is in chapter 3, verses 8, 9, and 10.

Whosoever is born of God does not keep on practicing sin. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Now we come to the fifth evidence.

And this fifth evidence is found in three places. The first place is in chapter 3, verse 24, the second part of the 24th verse. And hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.

So make a note of that. That's a 5A, if you will. Hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Now chapter 4, verse 13 is 5B. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And then chapter 5, verse 10 is 5C.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. Those are three parts. It must be important.

How many times in the Scripture does it say you must be born again? Once. And how many times does it say we know that he is in us by the Holy Spirit? In one little letter. Three.

So if repetition points out importance, this is extremely important. Repeat again for 324, second part of the verse. And hereby we know.

Notice, we know. Experientially. It's not the result of a process of logic.

This is not an assumption based upon something I have done. I did this, I did this, I did this, and this, and therefore this must be the case. No.

This is immediate. This is experiential. This is interior.

This is within. Hereby we know that he abideth in us. We know immediately by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness within himself. Now I want you to go back to Galatians chapter 4. No scripture is by private interpretation.

That is, no scripture is to be interpreted apart from the context, and the context of any verse in the Bible is all the verses that preceded it, and all the verses that follow it. It's all context. Now, I would like to be, follow in the path of Charles Finney, who once said, I do not preach.

I only try to explain what other people preach. Well, I like that, and I think that's basically what my mode of operation is, to try to explain, because I have a, well, a very pragmatic, a very, in effect, simple mind. That is, I hope I'm not simple-minded, but it's got to, it's got to, I've got to get a handle on it, or I can't, it doesn't mean anything to me.

It's very simple to be complex. It's very difficult to be simple. It's very easy to make things confused, and it's very hard to make things clear.

And so one has to strive diligently. Well, my mind is such that it doesn't have meaning to me until it becomes not only verbally clear, but experientially, inwardly real. So when we're talking about the witness of the Spirit, we have to, we have to realize that I, for one, am going to have to really struggle.

If struggle is necessary in this case, I think perhaps it is. I'm going to have to struggle myself, for me. Try to understand what the witness of the Spirit is, and what it isn't.

If it's that important, then it ought to be understood. It ought to be not only understood, it must be experienced. So let's look here at Galatians 4, part of the context, verses 4 to 6. But when the fullness of

time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Now, is that, to me that's extremely clear and extremely simple. Let's go back and look at the elements of it, and find out what is perhaps new.

When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. That's historically understood by us, and accepted by us, as reference to the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, God, who became flesh and dwelt among us. The purpose, to redeem them that were under the law.

That's us. That we might receive the adoption of sons. Now, the Spirit of adoption is the Holy Spirit.

I've said repeatedly, the only one in the universe that has the right to tell a person that they've come out of death into life, they've come out of condemnation into forgiveness, that they were the children of the God of this world by nature and by choice, have now become the children of God through faith in Christ. The only one who has the right and prerogative to tell a person that that has happened, is the Spirit of adoption. Namely, the Holy Spirit.

God, the Holy Spirit, He's the one who does the telling. Not me. Well, don't we have anything to do with this? Of course we do.

Of course we do. What are we to do? We're to be witnesses. Ye shall be witnesses.

What's a witness? A witness is someone who tells what he has seen, what he has heard, and what he's experienced. And if he goes beyond that, he's no longer a credible witness, he's indulging in hearsay. And the only thing you can do, therefore, in effect, as a witness, is to tell what you have seen of yourself.

Have you seen yourself? Well, if you haven't, you don't have much witness to, do you? You've got to tell what you've seen. Have you seen your own heart in the light of God's Word? Have you been awakened to discover that you didn't have peace or joy when you thought you had everything? Have you been convicted of the crime of turning to your own way? Have you seen the enormity of your guilt? Have you seen that in your heart were the seeds of every sin that's ever been committed by mankind during their pilgrimage on earth, that the only thing we've lacked has been incentive or opportunity, but that the capacity is there? Have you seen your heart? Do you have some idea of your heart? What have you seen? Have you seen something of the holiness of God as revealed in the Word? Have you seen something of the glory of Christ that He deserves to be loved and obeyed and worshipped and served? Because He is God come in the flesh. What have you seen about Christ? What have you seen about yourself? What insight have you had? Oh, you say, well, how can I see the heart? Well, there you go back again to the part of a person that knows the things of a person is the spirit of the person.

And if you've ever seen with the eyes of your understanding your own heart, then you're going to remember what Job said, I've seen thee and now I've seen myself. Now I see myself really the way I am the first time. All right.

Please do. What he converted and he had the centrifuge very low, say, and not his experience. Yes, definitely.

Of course. Was that something he had rather than a... Of course, absolutely. I thought I made that clear.

If I didn't, it's very glad you brought it up. Absolutely. It's like this.

Let me illustrate it again, trying for that clarity and simplicity. Somebody here is unmarried. I don't know who you are, but whoever you are, I want to talk to you right now.

Do you understand? Do you believe there is such a thing as marriage first? Oh, yes. Yes, I believe that. All right.

Do you believe that somewhere in the world is a young man who could love you? Oh, yes, I believe that. Do you believe that there is the possibility that you could meet and know that young man? Oh, yes. Do you believe, knowing yourself, that somehow or other that young man could want you to be his wife? Oh, yes, I believe that.

Do you believe that if that young man says to you, I want you to marry me, do you believe that if he says that, that you will say, Yes, I will. I know I will. Yes, I'll say that.

Do you believe that your parents will consent to your marrying that young man? Well, if I choose him, yes, because I know what they'd say. Yes, I do. Do you believe that when you and the young man go to the preacher, the preacher will say, Well, certainly I'll be pleased to perform the wedding ceremony.

Do you believe that? Oh, yes. Do you believe that when you and he go down to the clerk of court to get a marriage license, that they will give you a marriage license for \$5? Yes, I do. Oh, I know that.

I believe that with all my heart. Do you believe that when that company of people have come and brought their presents and you're there with all those flowers, people around to guard the young man so he can't run away at the last minute, all that crowd, preacher in front, strong people on both sides, that when the minister says to him, Will you take this woman to be your wife, that he'll say, I do? I believe that. Do you believe that when he says to you, do you take, that you'll say, I do? Yes.

All right. Now, that means you're married. What do you mean, married? I'm not married.

I'm sitting here. When you told me you believed all these things, marriage is by faith. And you've had faith.

That means you're... No, preacher. That doesn't mean I'm married. I believe unto marriage, but marriage is not believing.

Marriage is reality. Now, we wouldn't think of doing something so ridiculous in respect to marriage, but we do it every day in respect to salvation. And we applaud one another for doing it.

You believe unto, but it becomes a reality, not a presumption, not an assumption. Do you see the difference? Believing is not salvation. You believe unto salvation.

Salvation is a person. It's not a syllogism. He that hath the Son hath life.

He that hath the man hath a husband. But not believing about the Son is not life. You believe unto.

You don't substitute believing for reality. Oh, thank you, Elijah, for giving me the opportunity to expatiate on something, because it's the most important element. Let's go back.

When you have savingly received Christ, when the heart man believes, the total being reaching out to him, then there's an invasion. Then the Spirit of God quickens the human spirit. You are born of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit quickens your human spirit. And the part of a person that knows the things of a person is the spirit of the person that's in him. Job said that.

First book in the Bible. It's been clear ever since. Your brain doesn't know.

You know. And you're a spirit living in a body. Your ears don't hear.

You hear. You're a spirit living in a body. One day, loving friends are going to gather around a bed, and they're going to see my still form and say, He's gone.

And I trust tears come to their eyes. And he's gone. What do you mean he's gone? What do you mean he's gone? There he is.

Everything's there as it's always been. But he's gone. What part of him left? Oh, that's the part of a man that knows the things of a man.

The spirit of the part that knew, the part that hears, the part that sees, the part that feels, the part that thinks, the part that chooses. It's gone. What's left? The envelope.

Where's the letter? It went on. What's here? This is the envelope it came in. He's not that.

He's gone. That thinking, feeling, willing, choosing spirit is there. That's the part of us that knows.

That's the part of us that feels. And that's the part, when we savingly embrace Christ, God, the Holy Spirit, quickens that part of us. And since that's the part that knows everything, that's known, that's the part that knows that he's quickened us.

Because the first thing he does is to tell us, you can now call Almighty God, before whom you trembled in fear, you can call him Daddy, Father, Abba. Take Abba, turn the bees over, and what do you got, Papa? That term of love. You can call Almighty God, before whom you justly bowed your head in shame and in fear of his judgment.

Now you can say Abba, Father. That's the witness of the Spirit. Is it a feeling? No.

Is it a sensation? No. What is it? It's a knowing. If you've known you were lost, now you know you're forgiven, and you're pardoned, and you have eternal life.

It's an inner knowing. Well, what about all this thing about the plan? Isn't the plan important? Of course it's important. What about the plan of the wedding? Isn't that important? All these details? Of course they're important.

Of course it's important. Everything is important. But what's the reality? The witness of the Spirit.

That's the reality. That's the thing that's so important. To know.

Well, what does this require? This requires that we're going to let people close with God at the beginning. You see, if people get their assurance falsely so-called from me, if I convince you that you're a Christian, once you begin to doubt it, do you know where you're going to have to go? Not to the Lord. You're going to

have to come back to me.

Hey, that fix you gave me of considering myself a Christian is worn off. I need another fix. Can you give me another jab here with some more assurance? If you want that responsibility, then I suppose, and you're willing to hazard that kind of a chance, you presume to usurp the sovereign prerogatives of God.

Alright. But you know, I'd rather take a little longer. I'd rather make you close with the Lord and tell you how holy God is and how sinful you are, and what He did, and what you must do, and that when you've done what you must do, God will do what He's promised to do.

And when you have done and God has done, you will know. You tell me. Do you see the difference? You tell me! I won't tell you when you're passed from death to life.

You tell me! And I'll accept it. Because you're the final authority, you and the Lord. You tell me.

I can't tell you, but I'll tell you how, but you tell me when. Do you see the difference? Oh, such a big difference. But oh, how often with our children.

I think of one of our sons. I hope the damage is sometime undone. I think perhaps it is.

He came forward. I was pastor in New York, and he was there. Marjorie was so faithful in bringing our six children into New York City from New Jersey when I was pastor of church in the heart of Manhattan for some ten years.

One Sunday evening, I was speaking and my son, very serious there, never even stayed awake, which was unusual. And when the invitation was given, he slipped out into the prayer room to the side. And when I came in, my associate pastor, bless his heart, had his arm around my son and said, Tell your dad what's happened.

And he, my pastor, my associate knew better than that. He knew better than that. He knew he'd heard me preach.

He agreed with what I was saying. He knew what needed to be done with that lad. That he needed to be crowded to Christ and help until reality was in his heart.

But somehow he was overcome by the fact that it was pastor's son, and he put words in Jimmy's mouth, and Jimmy recited the words back and Ray gave him the whole formula. What's that mean, Jimmy? I guess that means I'm saved. I guess that means I'm saved.

Tell your dad. Dad, his eyes were as bleak as pebbles off the street. Dad, I'm saved.

I wanted to go and cry. I did when I got to my study. I couldn't.

What could I do? Just pray that God would make it real. Several years later, coming back from Harvey Cedars where I'd been speaking, Jimmy had been with me. We were turning off the road from Wyndham to go up to our home in Saskatchewan.

He said, Dad, would you pull over under the tree? I'd like to talk to you for a minute. He said, do you remember that night when I went forward in the church? I said, yes, Jimmy, I remember. He said, you know, within a few days I knew nothing had happened.

And I've been trying to pretend I'm a Christian ever since. But it doesn't work. I don't even know that the Bible's true or that there's a God or anything.

I know what I'm supposed to believe and I guess I believe it, but as far as my heart, it's so empty. There's nothing there, Dad. What are you going to do? You just listen to me speak for a week at Harvey Cedars? Well, I remember saying to him, Jim, you know the plan of salvation.

He said, Dad, I think I know it about as well as you do. I said, Jim, it's real. God is, the Bible is true, and there is such a thing as salvation.

God does make himself known to people. Jim, I'm never going to talk to you about this unless you bring the subject up. I'll be available anytime you want to talk.

Anytime you want to talk. But I'm not going to harass you. I appreciate your helpfulness when I'm away.

You're so helpful to your mother. Appreciate your spirit. Jim, I'm not going to, every day I'm going to pray for you.

You'll come to a reality of Christ. You'll know. You've been tampered with enough.

I'm just going to have to trust Christ to make himself real to you. But if you ever want me to talk to you, I will, but you can be sure of this, that every day that I awake and I'm alive, I'm going to pray for you. That you'll come to reality in Christ.

Well, he finished high school, never brought the subject up. He went to Cornell and we were there. He worked.

He was very helpful. And we just prayed for him. He never laughed or offered to talk about it.

Never raised a question. I came back from a trip and one thing I made him promise that night, I said, Jim, when you come to know Christ and you know that you know Him, not something like it was last time, but you know inside of you, when God has told you, when you have been told and you know from God that you're born of God, wherever you are in the world or wherever I am in the world, I want you to come and tell me. Now, I'm asking you that.

Will you promise? I promise. Well, I got back that night and I came into the yard and I saw an unfamiliar little VW bug. When I came in, there was Jimmy and somebody introduced as Gene Chase, also from Cornell.

And I greeted them. I didn't know why they were home. The kids came home for lots of reasons, to go hunting, to run away somewhere.

So I greeted them. I was awfully tired. I'd come from some distance and flown and driven up from New York, 150 miles and gotten home.

I said, Well, it's nice seeing you and I'm going to say good night. And I started in. When I got in on my way to our bedroom, I went, Dad, can I talk to you a moment? And it was Jim.

The door in the family room had closed. We sat down at the dining room table. He said, Jim, do you remember our night three years ago under the tree? I said, Jim, you know I do.

It's not been a day since then that I haven't prayed for you. Why? Well, he said, I've been at school. He said, God's been speaking to my heart.

Gene Chase asked me to go to prayer meeting with him in the Little Alliance Church and I went and then he asked me to go again. I didn't go. I came up.

He said, I tried to go to sleep and I couldn't sleep. And he said, Somehow or other I got on my knees. I don't know why or when.

Around midnight, I guess. And I was just fighting God and fighting myself and fighting the scripture and fighting everything. He said, Somewhere around three, between three and four o'clock, I stopped fighting.

And he said, I didn't even know what was happening, but I asked Jesus Christ to forgive me and pardon me and come into my heart. And he did. And I know.

And I told Gene what I promised you and Gene offered to drive me because, you know, I don't have a car. He said, I tell you, it's tough to wait. It's tough to trust God, trust Christ to work in the lives of people.

It's hard. When you know how to do it, when you're a professional at it. You know? I used to have converts by the dozen.

I could get as many children to profess faith in Christ as I could carry nickels in my pocket. Now it's different. You've got to have a quarter, but still it was the same.

But nothing happened. Just the same. Oh, to trust Christ to work and crowd people to Him and force them and surround them and cover them with prayer and intercession and love and expectation until something happens that's real.

Then that can stand the test. That's what we're talking about. That's the thing I'm so concerned about today.

My soul demands reality. Faith. Oh, I'm a philosopher.

I believe in philosophy. I love of truth is what it means. And I hope I'm something of a theologian.

I don't know about that. And I love church history. But these things are all just so peripheral.

It's reality. We're the Lord. And God has sent forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

You remember my telling you about Harriet Marsh. Does that name strangle your belly? Well, I'm going to tell you about her. Then I've got to leave.

I was at InterVarsity Alumni Week up at Cedar Campus, I guess they call it, up in northern peninsula of Michigan. You never see the campus. I was a speaker one summer quite a few years ago.

And I was talking about this because this has been terribly real to me for many, many years. I was pastor in New York then, so it was before 1966. And when I finished, Harriet Marsh, who was the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship staff worker for New York City at the time, said, can I speak for a moment? And she told how she had grown up in an agnostic home.

Her father was a brilliant man, a scientist, Ph.D. Her mother also was Ph.D. And she'd grown up in an agnostic home, utterly without any room, place for religion. Once or twice she'd gone to an Episcopal church for a wedding or a funeral or something, but had no nothing. She went to Douglas, which was the women's section of the University of New Jersey, part of Rutgers, Douglas College.

And the first one she met or saw there was a young student who was so radiant she just stood out in the whole class. Something about her was just so absolutely radiant. So Harriet found out who she was and maneuvered and pulled a little string here and there so she got assigned as a roommate to that person because I've got to find out what makes her glow.

And she found out that she was a born-again believer. Really a radiant person. I'd met her subsequently.

And Harriet just went in. She didn't do anything, but just being with her was enough so that Harriet had a deep thirst quickened within her and she had received the Lord. And so she started attending the early morning Bible study and prayer meetings and all the inter-varsity meetings among the students.

But there was a professor who knew her parents and was an agnostic and was jealous to keep Harriet in the stream of intellectual integrity. And he would repeatedly tell her how she compromised her intellect, how anyone with such a magnificent mind as Harriet could condescend to become involved with such superstitious papa nonsense. And finally it prevailed.

How much can you take from someone that you've been taught to respect all your life? And so she went to her roommate and to the other group when they came into the prayer meeting and said, Look, you know I've been going through a struggle. Well, finally I've decided that this is not for me. This whole Christian stuff is all right, but I've just been caught up with the warmth of your personalities and with your enthusiasm.

But I realize now that intellectually I cannot accept any of this and I've got to maintain my own intellectual integrity and honesty. So the only thing I can do is to just drop it all and leave it. So today I am no longer involved as a Christian.

I don't want to be known as a Christian. I will not attend your prayer meetings, your Bible studies. Personally I enjoy you, but do not include me in any of your activities.

Can I keep your friendship? And they said, Of course, Harriet. Now you notice what she didn't say. She didn't ask them to promise not to pray for her because that would have been intellectual nonsense for her to ask them to do something that she didn't believe in.

So she didn't say that. So they promised everything she asked. But did they pray for her? They really did.

They really realized this. There was a struggle going on. And they kept in her praying for her.

Well, somewhere at the library, Harriet came across the agnostic's prayer. Now she called herself an agnostic, so an agnostic's prayer. You know what it is? Oh God, if there be a God, save my soul if I have a soul.

She thought, Now there's sense in that. And even an agnostic could pray that. She thought about it.

So she said, Well, I guess I know my roommate's out. I guess I'll go try that. So she went back to her room and locked the door.

And she said, Kept practicing, Oh God, if there be a God, save my soul if I have a soul. And she said, Then I remembered that we knelt. So I said, Well, not even an agnostic could kneel.

And she said, I saw people fold their hands. So even an agnostic could bow their head and fold their hands. That wouldn't hurt.

So here she is at the bedside, elbows on the mattress, head bowed, eyes closed, hands folded, and repeating, priming herself, Oh God, if there be a God, save my soul if I have a soul. And she opened her mouth and said, Dear Heavenly Father. And she burst out sobbing.

And she got up and she ran down the hall and interrupted a Bible study going on. And she said, It's real. Why? Giving us His Spirit whereby we cry, Dear.

Her mind had been perplexed and confused, but this part of a man that knows the things of a man is the Spirit of man. And when she permitted her Spirit to speak, He enabled her to cry, Dear Heavenly Father. That's what we're talking about.

The witness of the Spirit. Father, our hearts go out to Thee today to thank Thee and praise Thee that salvation is not a theory, not a scheme, not a system of doctrine, not a decision, not a plan. But salvation is a person.

He that hath the Son hath life, for life is in Thy Son. And so we would ask Thee today that everyone here may know that knowing that surpasses all necessity for reason, reasonable but not based on reasoning, knowing, and for those to whom we witness and whom we assist and whom we help, that they too might know whom to know is life eternal. These things are written that you might know that you have eternal life, that our fellowship is with the Father, not just with theology about the Father.

And with His Son, that they may have fellowship with us. Lord, we ask Thee that some of these lessons may live in the hearts and minds of this people and that they may each have the joy of helping someone else into reality. In Jesus' name and for His sake we ask.

Amen.

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