

# Loved With Everlasting Love - Part 2

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon explores the depth of God's love and the complexities of human free will in the face of temptation and sin.*

**Duration:** 56:48

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 33:11, Matthew 3:2, Acts 20:20-21, Ephesians 1:8-12

**Topics:** "Everlasting Love"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the tendency of people to start something without doing their homework or fully understanding what is involved. He emphasizes the importance of going through a process when coming to faith in God. The process begins with awakening, where the Holy Spirit awakens the heart and brings about discontent and dissatisfaction. This leads to conviction, where the person recognizes their sinfulness and takes sides with God against themselves. The next phase is repentance, where the person changes their mind and renounces their previous way of life. This is followed by faith, where the person reaches out to embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior. The final phase is the witness of the Spirit, where the person experiences a personal relationship with God as their Father. The speaker highlights that everyone who is part of the family of God has gone through this process, even if they may not remember the specific moments of each phase.

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## Transcript

Tell them what's given to us. It's testimony, it's revelation of thyself in thy Word. And we thank thee that the Holy Spirit, who caused it to be written exactly as thou hast wanted us to receive it, is here with us, in us, to open thy Word and to minister to us the things that thou hast prepared for them that love thee.

Show us where we are, give us a glimpse of where thou dost want us to be and what thou dost want us to be, and quicken that resolve that we've made to be everything that the Lord Jesus intended us to be. So to that end, speak to us through thy Word and by thy Spirit, in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.

Ephesians, in the first chapter, last Lord's day when I was with you, we began by saying that the Bible does not teach systematic theology. The Bible teaches responsibility, privilege. Men systematize it.

Men will take all that the Bible has to say about a given subject and organize it and arrange it, put it into a system, and then interpret it. I see nothing wrong with that, as long as you remember who did what. If you remember that it's men that did the arranging and the systematizing and the organizing, and God that

gave the revelation, then there's no problem.

You can benefit from what men have done, as long as you remember who did it. You don't want to be confused about that. You want to keep your mind clear.

You don't want double exposure. You don't want double vision. You want to see it exactly the way it is, and the Scripture teaches responsibility, and where God teaches responsibility, he does it on the basis of theology, does it on the basis of truth.

God teaches privilege, and when he teaches privilege, he does it supported by truth. Now we're talking about the sovereignty of God. As that sovereignty is revealed in Ephesians, here in the first chapter, we saw in our consideration the other day, the first five verses, we saw that the Father is infinite, and he is omnipotent.

That is, he has no limit to his attributes, and that he has all power, limitless power, and that this one is the source of all blessing. All blessing is from him. We saw that the Father had only one Son.

The eternal Father had an eternal Son, with whom he fellowshiped through all eternity past, by and through the eternal Spirit. The Son, the eternal Son, for he never began to be Son, he is the eternal Son. The Son always did only that and all that which pleased the Father.

From eternity past, the Father has been absolutely pleased with the Son. Now, from eternity past, God as Father has planned for, and may I say, since the Scripture reveals that God is love, and that love ever always seeks an object, someone like itself, someone that needs that love and is capable of receiving it and returning it, so as to satisfy the heart of the one who began this love process, I say, from eternity past, God as Father has yearned for and longed for children. Now, in order for these to be the fit and proper objects of his love, they had to be like him.

We can only love that which is like us. Therefore, he had to give to these his children certain abilities, certain capacities, making them like himself. They had to be able to think and feel and will, or to choose.

Now, to make a being that can think and can feel and can will represents a degree of hazard, because what if by a certain thinking process they elect to feel something that isn't for their best interest, and they will to obtain that which they have felt. In other words, when God made man, he, to meet the need of his eternal heart, his yearning, longing heart for a beloved, for children to be the objects of his love, it was a calculated risk. The only being that could be the fit object for his love had to be one who could think and feel and will, had to have, as a triangle would show, the mental aspect of his personality, the emotional aspect, and the volitional aspect.

And only then would he be in God's image, in God's likeness, and only then would he be an appropriate object for God's love. Now, if God had made man so that he could only think in a straight line, as God wanted him to think, and only feel within certain limits, and only will in a certain restricted area, then man would not have been the object of his love. He would have been an automaton.

He would have been a machine. Now, let me illustrate the problem this presents. Suppose you, all of us as parents who reared children, have sometimes been a little bit concerned because in the early years they behaved so much like their parents.

Probably the father felt like the mother, and vice versa. The opportunity presented itself. But at any rate, suppose to eliminate this recalcitrance, this stubbornness, this willfulness, this disobedience, you could, would have, when your children were that age, been able to hypnotize them so that your mind totally controlled their mind, so that that child now no longer has a will of its own.

You know what's best for the child. You know what's going to be to its long-term best interest. And therefore, you simply have eliminated the possibility of the child doing something that'll hurt them by mind control, by hypnotizing them.

Now, suppose you as a parent enjoyed having the child express love for you. You as a father, mother, long for love from your child. Now, in order to protect against what the child might do that was wrong, you hypnotize them, they're still under hypnosis.

Now, you as a parent want to have an expression of love. So, still under hypnotic control, you say to the child, walk across the room. And like a little toy soldier, they walk across the room and stand in front of you.

And the next order is, climb up on my lap. And so mechanically, the child climbs up on your lap. Then your next order is, put your arms around my neck.

Mechanically, little arms go out like a robot around your neck. And then you say, put your lips on my cheek. The child puts its head over and puts lips on your cheek.

Now, say, mother, I love you. And stiff little mechanical lips say, mother, I love you. Now, let me ask you, mother, would this in any way ratify or satisfy your heart for love from your child? Would it? No.

Not at all. You see, there's nothing about the compression, the auricular compression of, you know, what is it? The anatomical juxtaposition of the auricular muscles in the state of compression. There's nothing about that that in any way gratifies the human heart.

No more than pressing your lips together. That's not a kiss. They're your fingertips together.

That's not a kiss. Not an expression of love or an expression of affection or a meaning. So God, then, making man in his image, yearning from eternity past for an object for his love, made a calculated risk.

He made him so that man could think and feel and will. That is, he had a mind, emotions, and volition. He could think, feel, and will.

Now, suppose to protect man, having given to him these attributes, these capacities, God would have then said, well, because he can think and feel and will, I, therefore, must control his environment so that there is never any stimulation of his mind to the point where he thinks the wrong thoughts. He's perfectly free to think, but I am going to totally control every stimulation of his mind so that at no time ever does he have anything coming in to stimulate his thought contrary to what I want. Now, let's ask that question a little further.

Do you feel that that behavior on the part of one, on your child, for instance, suppose, with your child, you were to rear that child in a, in a isolated environment, no disease germs could get to them, no conversation could get to them, no literature could get to them, nothing could touch that child physically or mentally that would stimulate their minds contrary to what you wanted. Would you feel any degree of

happiness or pleasure at the behavior of a child that has been so insulated and so isolated? Of course not, because the question would always be paramount in your mind, what would this one do? Were the opportunity given for him to think some other way than I've conditioned them to think? So when God made man with the capacity to think, the ability to feel, the power to choose, he did something else. The environment that he created for that man, in his sovereign wisdom, apparently was the very penal colony to which at some time in the far distant past he had cast his archenemy.

The Lord Jesus said, I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven. Well, where did he fall through? You don't have to, from this point for a next moment or two, you don't have to agree with me at all. I'm going to give you some of my metaphysics.

And when I'm taught, whenever I come to metaphysics, I'll identify it so you're perfectly free to turn off your tape recorder at night, because I can't validate what I'm about to say. And when I can't support it from Scripture, then I'm going to tell you I can't support this from Scripture. But it does say in Genesis 1-1, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

And in Genesis 1-2 it says, and the earth became without form and void. Not was made, but became. And without form means that there was destruction of whatever order there was, and void means that there's death reign.

Well, you say, well, what caused the destruction in Genesis 1-2? And I can't, I don't know. But the Lord Jesus said, I saw Satan fall from lightning from heaven. Now that's Scripture.

Paris Redead's metaphysics is that the place he fell to was the earth, and that the earth became without form and void when he lit. Because who is he? He is the very opposite of God, is this one. He's called the God of this world.

And what are his attributes? Well, God is love, so he is hate. God is light, so he is darkness. God is life, and if he's the opposite, then Satan is death.

And God is truth, and Satan is a lie. So this God was cast out of heaven, this one who would be like God, made, put down in his own little terrain where he could use his attributes and create his world. And the world was without form and void.

Now, there are more stars than they've ever been able to count, and more planets, and they still don't know how big or how far or how much many, but I'm certain that if God in his sovereignty had wanted some other place to put man, he would have been able to work it out. But the place he came was a place that was without form and void. And then we find that there begins the recreation, and the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the deep, and the Lord said, Light be! That was the first thing, and then there was light and darkness to show the contrast.

And then this planet was recreated. And what you have record of in Genesis, the first chapter, is the recreation of the planet. The preparation of it is the habitat for man.

And he made a garden, and he put man in the midst of the garden. And he knew whose terrain he was on, and he knew all about the one who was there. One day he said to Adam and Eve, You can't come into the garden anymore.

And he put an angel there with a flaming sword to keep them out. Now, if God in his sovereignty had wished, had so willed, he could have sent that angel two days or a little while earlier to keep Satan out. But he didn't do that.

In his sovereignty, he permitted the prince of darkness, the God of this world, in the form of a serpent, to speak to Mother Eve. And what did he do? He spoke ideas to her mind. Now, what was it that God had done when he made man in his image? He gave him the ability to think.

And what is the proposition that's coming from the God of this world to Mother Eve? It's an idea. Idea that in its effect says, You think God loves you? God doesn't love you. God's your enemy.

You thought he was your friend. You think God wants you to be happy? God doesn't want you to be happy. He wants you to be miserable.

Why, look at this fruit. He told you not to eat it. He knows it's good to eat.

He knows that it will make you wise. He knows it'll make you like God. And he doesn't want you to be like... Who's saying this? The one who before said, I'll put my throne above the throne of the most high.

I'll be like the most high. That's the one who's saying, he knows you'll be like God. But what you see, you have to understand, we don't know what angels were.

We don't know much about them. But we do know that the Bible does not say they're made in the image and likeness of God. Only one so described as man.

And we do not know much about their attitude or the relationship between angels and God. But we do know that the Bible says that God loved man. And it doesn't say that he loved angels.

Now, I don't know what his attitude was. I just know what it says and what it doesn't say. And therefore, the only creature made in the image and likeness of God is man.

And to this member of this race, to Mother Eve, the proposition was presented to her mind to satisfy her good appetites in a bad way. That's what temptation always is. A proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way.

And she thought about it. And the more she thought, the more she felt. And the more she felt, the more she thought.

And the more she thought, the more she felt. And it went on. It was a revolving process.

She felt, she thought. She felt more, she thought more. Until finally, she decided.

She exercised her volition. She made a choice. And that's always the way it goes.

It's always the way it goes. Mental, emotional, volitional. Mental, emotional, volitional.

She thought, she felt, she decided. She thought, she felt, she decided. Ever and always that way.

Words to the intellect, ideas stimulate the mind, which affected the emotions, which affected the will. And so, Mother Eve chose. She sinned.

She decided to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way. Temptation, that's a proposition presented to the intellect to satisfy a good appetite in a bad way. That's why when the Lord Jesus was tempted in all points as like as we are, yet without sin, he rejected the temptation.

Temptation is not sin. So, what happened was that Mother Eve sinned. And when she sinned, she went back to Adam and had to report what she had done.

And in effect, she said, Adam, you got a choice. You can stick with me, if you like what you got, or you can stick with God. But I've already done what God told us not to do.

Now, she was beguiled as she relistened to this, but he now is making a decision that is not in the same degree. Beguiled as she relistened to this, but he now is making a decision that is not in the same degree. His temptation is there, but it's different.

It's not the precise to... Apparently, Lucifer did not tempt Adam the same way. That might not have been effective with Adam, but it was with Eve. Now, the issue is, are you going to go back to the state you were before when you were alone? Are you going to have Eve, whom you can see all 24 hours a day, or God, whom you visit for a few minutes in the cool of the afternoon? What are you going to have? What are you going to do? And so, his decision is that he is going to stay with Eve.

That's his decision. That's his sin. That is the decision that he makes.

Now, what has happened in this? Well, they have died. The day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die. In what aspects did death come? Well, look at it for a moment, because that's what you see here in this next verse in Ephesians 1. What happened? Well, first they died in the sense of physical.

Physical death became the consequence. Up till then, God had made man so that he was capable of living indefinitely, because every cell in the human body is renewed every so often, and age is an insult to the Creator. He made us so that we could go on living indefinitely if it hadn't been for another principle that he introduced because of man's moral character.

Man began to die physically. Then man came under legal death. At that point, man forfeited all right and claim upon God.

The only thing that man could ask of God at that time was, be just when you judge me. That was the only claim he had because he had sinned, and therefore God had no longer any responsibility to care for man. Man had taken himself away.

You've seen ads in the paper. Having left my bed and board, I am no longer responsible for the bills and debts and obligations of so-and-so. Legal death.

Legally no longer responsible. That's what happened when man sinned. Then the third thing that happened was that man was separated.

Death is always separation from fellowship with God. The ad is expressed in the fact that that first pair are hiding in the garden, when God is expected to be in the garden, trying to pull the leaves down over them, whispering to one another, get down, get down, so he can't see you. They no longer want fellowship with God, and there are no longer any basis for it.

And then, of course, the last is eternal death, eternal separation from God in hell, a place of punishment because of the nature of the crime against God. Well, all of these things happened. Now, God had foreseen them.

In his being, in his infinite, limitless attributes, he had anticipated and foreseen this. So, as God had, from eternity past, longed for children, and God had planned that at a certain point in time, he would make a being in his image and in his likeness to be his child, so God had recognized and realized exactly what he had to do with that being, the kind of opportunity he had to give to man. And if he knew the kind of opportunity to give to man, he also would know the response that man would make, not because he had to.

Now, let me ask you, why did Mother Eve sin? What was it that caused her to sin? What was it? Did I hear someone say a fallen, sinful nature? No, there wasn't any fallen, sinful nature. It was a choice, a mind, emotions, will. And then what made Adam sin, a fallen, sinful nature? No, a mind to think of alternatives, emotions, will.

Up until that time, 100% of all the people in the world sinned, and they didn't have a fallen, sinful nature. Well, it's only two, but that's still 100%. The point I'm trying to make is that the element of sin that gives sin the character of a crime is the fact that it is the function of the intellect, the emotions, and the will, the choice, the choice.

So what am I pointing out? I'm pointing out this, that in that environment, God knew that with no other inducement than just a proposition to the intellect, the function of the emotions, the will would be exercised contrary to him. God anticipated this. God saw this.

Now, if that would be true with that first pair, then it would be subsequently true of all that were to follow, because they would have not only the proposition to the intellect, the emotions, and the will, but they would have the environment and their natures. So it would be true then subsequently that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There's none righteous, no not one, none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God.

They are all gone out of the way, or they are together become unprofitable. Now, God saw that before he ever made man in the first place. That's what you've got to understand.

In his sovereignty, God decided to make man knowing all of this that would occur. Knowing all of this, why? Because his son was the lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. As a bridegroom for a bride, I will be willing to give myself to redeem this one that we're going to make, that I will make in our image and our likeness, because he's the agent of creation, is the son.

But in making man, even before he made him, he had to anticipate everything that was going to happen. Well worked out. All the details there.

Everything is in place. Everything has been anticipated. No room for error.

No room for chance. We are told that in America, out of every new business, out of the new businesses that are started by people who want to go into business, 95% fail in the first two years, and four additional percent will fail in the next three years. So that by the end of five years, only about one or two out of a hundred that started out are still functioning.

And the reason was simple. They didn't do their homework. They didn't get the facts.

They didn't find out what was involved. They didn't realize what had to be done. I'm sure you do.

I'm sure you saw that as a professor. Now, this is a tendency of the human heart, to leap. Half taught, half prepared.

Are we going to attribute that to God? Never. Not our God. Not the God of the Bible.

Not this one who has infinity above all of his attributes. Infinite wisdom. Infinite knowledge.

Infinite power. Limitless in all of his... Are we going to attribute that to him? Oh, we'll accept it for ourself, because we know it's true, but not for him. So we're going to have to realize that before God ever started this undertaking, he knew all that was involved in it.

And when he decided how he would save men, he knew to whom those methods could be effective with the limits that he must impose upon himself, how he would do it. So what do we find? So from eternity past, therefore, God the Father has planned and purposed all that this family-to-be of his children would ever need before he made the world. He purposed salvation.

And he knew everything his children were going to need. He knew what was going to happen. He knew how they were going to... what sin was going to do, the damage it would do.

He knew all about it. So he, before he made the world, he had already anticipated everything that his children were ever going to need. I think that's wonderful.

He planned it, because he knew what they would need. He purposed it. He knew what they would need.

That's before the world began. Now, in the fullness of time, God the Son came into the world not only to satisfy the law's demands in regard to these that were to be adopted into the family, because the law had to be satisfied, not only to pay the penalty for sin so that God could be gracious and forgive sinners, that, but that was only one aspect. That was the legal aspect of what the Lord Jesus did on Calvary.

But the other aspect was this. God had planned everything that man was going to need. God had purposed everything that man was going to need.

That included justification, that included satisfying the law, but it was much more than satisfying the law. It was everything that man was going to need. Do you see? God, in His sovereign good pleasure, said, these that I'm going to adopt into my family, I'm going to give them everything they need to be everything I want them to be.

So when the Lord Jesus came, He said, He came to do the will of the Father. What was the will of the Father? The will of the Father was that He accomplish everything that the Father intended for Him to accomplish. So, before God made the world, He planned and He purposed our salvation.

And in the fullness of time, the Son, by His death and burial and resurrection, provided instead everything the Father purposed. Now, do you see? The Father anticipated and He planned and purposed. The Son, in the fullness of time, provided not only justification, not only regeneration, but also our sanctification and our provision for everything we're going to need to be everything the Father wants.

The Father purposed, the Son provided. Now, we find in the latter part of this text, in verses 13 and 14, that everything that the, before the foundation of the world that God the Father planned and purposed, everything that in the fullness of time God the Son provided, now God the Holy Spirit is waiting to perfect in us, make real to us, accomplish in us everything that the Father planned and the Son provided. That's all in His sovereign good pleasure of His will.

Ooh, we get, this gets to be pretty, not heady, but hearty stuff, doesn't it? It really gets down to the heart here when you find out how much He knew about you and how much He loved you and how much He provided for you. Let's go, let me, let me replace one word what you said and I think I could handle it as far as the adversary is concerned. Permit.

Permit the adversary to do what he did because what, there's a big difference between His making Him do it and permitting Him to do it. And He did it because God didn't, right, okay, so interpret, provide in terms of permit. Yeah, that's what happened precisely.

Okay, now, now we go back that I can't find it. I got a metal block, but as I say, I got a marvelous memory, but it's awfully short. At any rate, it says, I hath not seen or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the mind of man.

The things which God hath prepared for them to love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit which He hath given us. Well, maybe so. Let's not get off into angelology now here, Rob, because I wouldn't want to, I don't want to rob the Lord of what He's done here in this particular one.

So from eternity past, God the Father planned and God the Son provided, God the Holy Spirit perfected, and now, now, let's look for a moment. Who are the adopted? Who are the ones that are going to be the heirs of this great salvation? What's the invitation on the gate? What does it say out there on that gate? Does it say, only the elect dare enter? Oh, it doesn't say only the elect may enter. What does it say? Whosoever will may come.

That's what the message is to the world. Whosoever will may come. Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

See, we don't need to worry about who the elect are. That's not in that's not any responsibility of ours. Our responsibility is to go to all men everywhere and plead with them to repent the way Paul did in Ephesus.

He said, I was with you night and day from house to house, teaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Don't you ever worry that somebody's going to be saved who wasn't among those that God didn't know. Don't worry about that.

That's, you just, look, if we'll tend to our business, we can trust God to take care of His. How's that? Is that fair enough? Is that fair enough? We'll just take our business and we'll just let God take care of His and not worry about whether or not He's up to it. See, so the message that we give as we go out is this.

Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die as I live, saith the Lord? I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn and live. Repent was the call that John the Baptist put out. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved, said Paul to the Philippian jailer.

Now, now, whosoever will may come. There it is. Look at it.

That great door. Whosoever will may come. Everyone everywhere is invited.

Now, the fact that when we get inside, we turn around and look at the inside of the gate and it says chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that doesn't worry me. That's got two aspects to that. Everyone who would repent was chosen.

Everyone who would believe was chosen. Everyone who would come was chosen. So, and the responsibility goes back.

What about those who didn't repent and didn't believe? I don't know, but it was their choice. It was their choice. They, they chose not to.

God put the same spirit in to plead with man. Same message. I don't know why one comes and one doesn't, but I saw lots of things I don't know.

As soon as I can define electricity, I've got a lot of problems I'm going to take up with God. Really do. But until they tell, I find out what electricity is and somebody defines it, then I'm going to leave some of these other problems.

Because look, we, we make our coffee with electricity. We, we fix our toast with electricity. We cook with electricity.

We cool with electricity. We get hot with electricity. And nobody knows what it is.

So, since that's the case, then there are some problems that I, some questions I haven't had answered yet, but I can tell you the day that we get a definition of what electricity is, then I'm going to really start pestering God about some of the questions I haven't had answered yet. But until that time, I think I'll concentrate on wait for electricity because that, I'm dealing with that every day all the time. And the other questions really aren't interfering with anything anyhow.

Because I can go to sinners everywhere and say, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Whosoever will may come. Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life.

I'm not restricted. Some other theoretical philosophical questions? Yeah, I'm curious about it. But you see, it would be just as silly for me not to cook or cool or heat or whatever or, or be entertained and used or educated by electricity as it would, because I can't define it, as for one to say, well, until I can answer that question, nonsense, sheer nonsense.

Let's be consistent. Lots of things we don't understand. Lots of things.

All right. Now, we do know this, that there's no reason at all in us, in anyone, why we should be among those that are placed in the family of God as his children. Why we are accepted in the beloved.

Nothing in us. You know, we're all cut off the same bolts of goods. Maybe you were a little different wolf than mine.

My bolt may have been a little coarser burlap than yours, a little more velvety silk. But whatever the wolf is, I have news for you. The warp is the same.

The warp is the same. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The up and out, the down and out, all the same.

So we know that in us, there's nothing, nothing at all to commend us to him. We're there not because of us, but because of him. Now, having seen a little bit about how we are accepted and adopted for the son's sake, not our own, we ought to take a look as to how this provision that God has made for the upbringing of those adopted into his family is going to operate.

In verse 7, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Oh, it's through the shedding of his blood that our past sins are removed. That satisfies the law.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die, the Lord Jesus identified with us, and each one who will ever be part of that family, and he died in our place and in our stead. So all of us that are in this family of the Father came as sinners by nature, by choice, and by practice, and we were brought to see the death of Christ. Christ died for sinners.

Christ died for us. We were sinners. And all of us that came into his family came by the same process.

Identically the same process brought each of us into Christ. It's amazing. Wherever it may have been that you met the Lord, there was a process.

Now, you may not have even known the steps of the process. I've talked to you about them in the past, but I want to just refresh your mind in a moment. The process by which God brings one out of death into life is always the same.

It can all happen in a minute. In John Bunyan's case, it took eight years. Maybe in yours, it took longer.

But they all happen. The first phase of the divine operation is awakening. God the Spirit broods over your heart the same way he brooded over the world in Genesis 1. Light be, and the sinner is awakened.

Discontent, unhappiness, dissatisfaction. There's something wrong with my life. I thought when I got here everything would be fine.

I'm here and it's not fine. I don't know what it is. Something's the matter.

What is it? Awakening, distress, unrest, discontent. There's awakening. And when the Word comes and it's brought, then that awakening issues into another phase of conviction when we're convinced that God is righteous and we are sinners.

Conviction is when we take sides with God against ourselves. The next phase is repentance when we change our mind. We've been God up until now in our own life.

We renounce it. The fourth phase is faith that reaches out through the years of history to embrace the Son of God. And the fifth is the witness of the Spirit to our own hearts whereby we can call Almighty God, Abba, Father.

Awakening, conviction, repentance, faith, and the witness of the Spirit. Now everyone who's in the family of God has come that way. May not remember when awakening became conviction or conviction became repentance.

May all happen in a minute. May take years. May go from one back to another, but it all is there once we're in the Father's family.

We're there because each one, each aspect of it has something of great value. Now, point I want to leave you with today as we start to consider the 8th to the 12th verse is that all of the adopted children, everyone brought into the Father's family, are taught to know God's will. And the one thing that characterizes the children of God is desire to know God's will.

The one thing we have in common, regardless of what our background was when we came to Christ, the one thing we have in common, you know, it's astounding to me to watch the animals on the farm. When you see a little leggy foal that's born and you look at that weak sprawly thing with legs so long and he gets up and stumbles and falls all over itself and puts his foot on its own ear, you know, it's just a bundle of bone, bag of bones. But there's something in that little foal, if it's born alive, that makes it want to walk.

It will try to get up. It will stumble and get up again, strength coming with each effort. There's something in that little life there, that bundle of bones, that bag of bones that said, you don't lie here all wrapped up in your feet and lay in the grass and smell the weeds.

There's some life there, some pressure, some instinct, something that says, stand up. And so it tries and it tries and it tries and every time a little stronger until it stands. And then being able to stand up, it says, there's something in it that says, walk.

So one stumbling step after another and those spindly legs and then there's some pressure in it that says, eat. Now they never had a foal's operating manual. No, no one ever gave it an operating manual with step-by-step directions.

No, no, they didn't do that. But there's some life in it and it says, eat. And it isn't long until it has made the ultimate connection and it has discovered that nature provided it with an ongoing source of nourishment.

And I tell you, to me this is thrilling. This is wonderful. Why? Because it proves to me the little foal has life.

Now when I find someone that says they've been born into the family of God, they passed from death to life and they're willing to lay down next to the sin they've lived in all their years with no pressure to stand above it, with no inner desire to walk from it and no appetite to feed on that new nourishment. Look, when I look at a foal and its legs don't move and its ears don't twitch and its eyes stare, no desire to stand, no desire to walk and no desire to eat. Please don't think I'm cruel when I dig a hole and roll it in.

The little foal is dead. And please don't think me cruel when I find those who name the name of the Father in heaven and say they've been born into the family of God and they're brethren of Jesus Christ and they have no desire to stand and to walk and to feed. Is that cruel? I think not.

Everyone who's been born into the Father's family has a desire to know the will of God and to do the will of God and to be the best evidence you have in your heads today is a cry in your heart, oh, to be like thee, oh, to be like thee, blessed Redeemer, pure as thou art, come in thy fullness, come in thy pureness, stamp thine own image deep on my heart. That's the cry of life in the childhood. Father, we thank thee that all that thou hast done is to the good pleasure of thy will, redeemed by the blood of Christ, that we might be to the praise of the glory of thy grace.

So, Father, stir us up with that yearning, longing to fulfill all that thou hast purposed and planned and all the Lord Jesus provided and all the Holy Spirit is willing and waiting to perfect it. We ask it not for our sakes, but to glorify thee, the God of all grace. In the name of our Lord Jesus, we pray.

Amen.

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