

Loved With Everlasting Love - Part 4

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon explores the sovereignty of God in relation to human responsibility and the transformative power of grace in believers' lives.

Duration: 47:33

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 17:30, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 1:15, Hebrews 2:3

Topics: "Everlasting Love"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of salvation and the role of each member of the Trinity in the process. The Father planned and purposed our salvation before the foundation of the world, while the Son provided and accomplished everything that the Father had planned. The Holy Spirit is responsible for perfecting and making real in us everything that the Father purposed and the Son provided. The ultimate goal of our salvation is to bring praise and glory to God. The speaker emphasizes the sovereignty of God and encourages the audience to trust in His plan and purpose for their lives.

Transcript

Father, we're grateful for this privilege today of coming to thy word. We ask thy blessing now on everyone present. You know us.

You know our needs. You know two of us in the same place. You know two of us with quite the same spiritual development.

You're dealing with each of us according to your purpose to make us like thy son. Each of us needs something different. How grateful we are that thou art sufficient for us.

Thou art enough. That's thy name, El Shaddai, the God who is enough. And so we're looking to thee today to fit a blessing to every heart.

Everyone who's come, Father, may there be a meeting with thee, not just with other people about thee, but with thee. May we see thy face through the eyes of our heart. May we hear thy voice and feel thy touch and somehow sense that this has been more than just time spent together.

We ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake. Now we're talking about the sovereignty of God in Ephesians, and I opened this four weeks ago today by saying that the Bible does not teach systematic theology. The Bible teaches responsibility and privilege, and then men will take certain verses of Scripture out of the

context and gather them under under headings.

Well, that's useful. It's nice to find out what the Bible has to say about a given subject. Now, we did not approach this on the basis of systematic theology.

I'm not sure whether Brother James, when he talked to me about this, was rather hoping I might do that. I think not. Rather, as I prayed about it, I felt we should approach it from the standpoint of seeing how the Scripture teaches responsibility, how it teaches truth, how it teaches privilege.

Now, in Ephesians, I suppose this first chapter of Ephesians is one to which those considering or studying the sovereignty of God will very frequently turn, and rightly so, because there's much in it that does deal with that subject. Look in verse 4. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. This obviously has to do with someone that's in charge.

You know, when I went to the University of Minnesota after Bible school in Minneapolis, I encountered some professors that were very, very, well, anti-God. They were not just agnostic, but they were militant in their unbelief. Because I had come from Bible school, because I was a young preacher, they had rather had fun with me and tried to, at least.

Maybe I gave them a case, and they put a lot of pressure on me, and I recall wondering, well, maybe, just maybe, there was something to what they said. And these questions about the authority of the scripture and so on. Well, I started to read the Bible through again and let it speak for itself.

And I started. I got the first four words, and I began to really think about them. In the beginning God, I never read any further than that.

At that, with that particular exercise. I went further later in other times than had previously and since, but in that particular exercise of trying to let the Bible speak for itself, those first four words really were enough. Just think for a moment.

Someone who was before the beginning, someone who thinks, feels, and wills, who depends upon no one for his being, who has, looks to none other as the source of his, of his being. I decided that if intellectually I was capable of accepting the first four words of the Bible, I would never have any problem with anything that followed. The, the stretch, the strain of, on the human mind, on the imagination, on the human spirit, to accept the fact that one exists before the beginning, had no source other than himself for his being, dependent upon none for his being.

I think one of the professors had made quite a lot about Jonah in the, in being swallowed by a great fish. Why, I concluded if the scripture had said that Jonah swallowed the whale, that I'd still be able to accept it. After I had gone through the exercise of, of grasping and holding and accepting those first four words in the beginning God.

Well now, that God who depends upon no one, who absolutely needed none for, to be complete or whole, he wasn't sustained by any other, this God, before the foundation of the world, exercised his sovereign prerogatives. He chose for himself a people, according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Now, you're dealing with sovereignty there.

You're dealing with someone who reigns, who rules, who governs, who chooses, and doesn't ask anyone to counsel him or advise him. I think you, you get the feeling there that, that here is someone that's able to

make that. Then in the fifth verse, having predestinated those whom he chose under the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

It sounds like sovereignty, does it not? I'll tell you. Having predestinated us under the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. There's one who's in charge.

And in verse 9, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he has purposed in himself. You're talking about sovereignty. He didn't consult with any committee.

He didn't ask for advice. He, you see, he's in charge. That's, that's what he's saying.

He's in charge. And in verse 11, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Now, it sounds pretty strong, doesn't it? It's amazing.

There you've got it. That's, that's, that's what we're talking about. Now, having seen that, we have to establish what this is all about.

We have to realize that there's purpose in this. There's reason, ultimate purpose. In verse 6, having predestinated us, and 5, having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

His sovereignty has an end. In the end is the praise of the glory of his grace. And again, in the next section, says that we are accepted in the Beloved.

In other words, verses 4 and 5 tell us that before the foundation of the world, the Father planned, and he purposed, that it should be to the praise of the glory of his grace. And in verses 6 and 7, and 8 and 9 and 10 and 11, it says that in the fullness of time, the Son provided or accomplished or bought everything that the Father purposed. So God as Father purposed our salvation.

God as Son provided our salvation. Through the praise, as we see in verse 12, that we should be to the praise of his glory. Now in the next portion, verses 13 and 14, we're talking about God the Holy Spirit.

And God the Spirit is going to perfect, I like to use the alliteration, perfect in us, make real in us, everything the Father purposed and the Son provided. And in the 14th verse, under the praise of his glory. So now we're talking about sovereignty.

You've seen it. You felt it. I think it grips your heart.

Here is a sovereign upon a throne who reigns and rules. But I want you to notice that this sovereignty is extended to sinners. If you'd like to turn to Acts chapter 17 and verse 30, there's a rather interesting thing.

Acts 17:30, the Apostle is talking about Mars Hill, and he's talking with the philosophers. And in that 30th verse, but now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent. That's a sovereign speaking, isn't it? That's his message to the sinner.

God commandeth all men everywhere to repent. Why? Because he, a sovereign, hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead. God commands men to repent.

And in Luke chapter 13, verses 3 and 5, the Lord Jesus is talking to that group that were questioning him about certain current events, and asked him what did he think about the fact that Caesar, the pilot soldiers, had gone into the temple and had taken someone going there for sanctuary, and tower had fallen on some and killed them. And in verses 13 and chapter 13, verses 3 and 5, verily I say, and except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. That's a sovereign speaking.

But notice the change in approach. To the sinner, God commandeth all men everywhere to repent. But how, what's his, what's his mean, what's his attitude? What's his approach to the child of God? Turn to Romans chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. You'll see a tremendous change in the way God speaks.

This is the apostle, but the apostle is speaking by inspiration, and behind the apostle is the Lord Jesus. The same apostle who said, God commandeth all men everywhere to repent, might have said, God commandeth all of his children to present their bodies, but he didn't. Notice the change once you're in the family.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your body, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. To sinners, God commandeth. To the saints, he beseeches.

Same sovereign, he's lost none of his sovereignty, none of his authority, none of his power, but he's talking to his children. He's talking to those that have been brought out of death into life, those that have been made partakers of his nature. And so now, this same sovereign exercises his sovereignty to change his approach.

Does he have a right to do that? Or are we going to be sovereign and say, since you're sovereign, you have to do it the way we think a sovereign should do it. But then who's claiming sovereignty in that case? The person who says God has to, because God did it this way with sinners, he has to do it this way with his children. Who's the sovereign? We are.

No, no, we can't, we can't, we aren't sovereign. All we are is just disciples, learners, students. We find out how he does it, but we don't tell him how to do it.

So when he says that his approach to his children is not going to be one of commanding, but one of entreating and beseeching, does that mean that he's less concerned with his children than he was with sinners? Not at all. Does that mean that we should take it lightly? Certainly sinners should not take lightly the fact that God commanded all men everywhere to repent. Should the saints take lightly the fact that he says, I beseech you that you present your bodies a living sacrifice? Because he changes in his sovereign will from commanding to entreating, does that diminish the importance? Only for little minds, only for those that can only move by the whip, never by the heart.

For those who've been born into the father's family, when they see the apostle, as it were, standing there pointing to the nail wounds in the hands of the Lord Jesus, and says, by these mercies in the hands of the Son of God who died for you, he beseeches you that you present your body, that becomes extremely important. Not something to be taken lightly, but something that should be held Now, so in Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 15, we've had these statements of his sovereignty in verses 4, 5, 9, and 11. Now in verse 15, notice the change that occurs.

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. They've repented. They've been born of the Spirit of

God.

They have the witness and changed life in love to the saints. Evidently, it was a real work, genuinely done. You'd say, well, look, Paul, hey, we're saved.

If we die, we're going to go to heaven. Isn't that the big thing, to get people out of hell? Isn't that what this is all about? And Paul says, listen, when I discovered that you were pardoned, when I found out you were justified, when I was satisfied that you'd been genuinely repented, had genuinely repented, and gave evidence that you had been born of God, I put you on my prayer list. Just about the time you'd get off of everybody else's, you got onto his.

Why? You see, God's purpose wasn't to save, keep people out of hell. He had another purpose. That we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

That's what the sovereign decided. And that these children should be like Christ. That's what he decided.

They should grow up in all things like Christ. Not that they should just have a hell insurance policy with the premiums paid up in advance. That wasn't the purpose of it all.

But it was that people should be transformed, made, remade in the image and likeness of God's dear son. So that he set his sovereignty to the point of saying, all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow.

He did predestinate. What? To be conformed to the image of his son. That's what he predestinated.

That we'd be like Christ. And so he's telling these people at Ephesus, hey, you gotta understand, God set his sovereignty to make you like Christ. He purposed you'd be like Christ.

That's where the sovereignty of God is set. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Now, these people that have worshipped at the statue of Diana, in immorality, in bestiality, in every kind of dark and evil thing, Ephesians, Gentiles, they've now come to Christ.

They've been awakened, they've been convicted, they've repented, they've savingly embraced the Son of God, they have the witness of the Spirit within and have changed life without. And Paul said, I'm praying for you. I'm praying for you.

Whole attitude changes now. The same sovereign God has sovereignly determined that with his children, he is going to entreat, he's going to intercede and pray. Why, in fact, his son is at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for them who come to God by him, for the redeemed.

And he's praying for them. And we know what he's praying, that as he is, so we will be in the world, that we'll be conformed to the image of Christ. That's what he's praying.

So here the Apostle says, listen, I'm not, and John, in the 17th chapter says, I'm not praying for the world, I'm praying for them you've given me out of the world, that they all may be in union. Even as we are in union, they may be in union. So the Lord Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, interceding for whom? For us, for the believers, for the redeemed.

Now, this is the beginning here in the 15th verse, is the first of the New Testament prayer, the first of the seven prayers of Paul. And Paul is echoing the intercessory ministry of Christ at the right hand of the Father. This was written long before John 17 was.

In fact, John's, the Gospel of John probably wasn't written until ah, 85 AD, maybe 95 AD, 50 to 60 years after the ascension of Christ. And this was written halfway down. And so Paul is, is, is praying for them.

But I want you to go to another verse. I want you to go to Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 3. You see, because God changes, oh, every one of us are all very, very clear in our minds about, uh, what Acts 17 30 says, God commanded all men everywhere to repent to the point of the day in which you'll judge the world. What about all this sweet light? What about all this beseeching and imploring? Are there any teeth in it? Does this sovereign God put teeth into this? He's changed his attitude, but is there any teeth in it? All right.

But what about the sin of, of, of having the word and not believing it? What about the sin of knowing truth and not practicing it? What about the sin of having light and not walking it? What about the sin of indifference? Not the sins that are of the world's sins, but him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not. To him it's sin. What about the sin of unconcern? Look what Paul, what, what the writer of Hebrews said.

You know, in the first chapter he's saying, God spoke to us in times past by the prophets, and now he's spoken unto us by his son, and says, therefore we ought to give them more in his teeth. To the things which we have heard from the son, for if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard them? Now, this salvation is not salvation from the penalty of sin. See, the word salvation is a very big word in the scripture.

In fact, you could say, I have been saved, I was saved, I am being saved, and I shall be saved. Those are all scriptural expressions. I have been saved from the purpose of sinning, I repent it.

I was saved from the penalty of sin, I receive Christ as my substitute, my Lord and Savior. I am being saved from the power of sin by his life. I shall be saved from the presence of sin.

Now, the scripture puts salvation in all those different tenses. So when it says here, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, he's not talking to sinners. Huh? He's not talking to sinners at all.

He's talking to the saints. He says, God demanded all men everywhere to repent because he's appointed a day in which he will judge the world. But what the writer of Hebrews is saying, listen, do you think, dear child of God, that all of this that the Father purposed before the foundation of the world, that the Son provided, and the Holy Spirit is ready to perfect in you, is of such little importance that you can neglect it and not be, have a loss for the neglect.

I've had some people, I remember once they heard me, heard me speaking in a Bible conference, and they said, you know, brother, uh, I'm not going to come anymore. I'm saved. If I go to heaven, die, I'll go to heaven.

I know my sins are forgiven. And I know that there are a lot of people that are eager. They want something else.

They want something different. They want something better. But I believe the Bible teaches that the main work of Christ was to keep people out of hell.

And I know if I die, I won't go to hell. And I got everything that I'm interested in Christ to get. Son, it's not coming to any more of your meeting.

Did you make me upset? I had to say, well, I think you're, I guess, smart on your part. If I had that attitude, I'd do the same thing. I wouldn't come here.

Because if you know to do good and you don't do it, that's going to add guilt to you. Of course, if you know what the truth is and you don't go where you can hear it, that isn't so good either. But that's their decision, not mine.

He was very honest, very straightforward. He said, there's a plateau up there where the eager can go. There's something called a deeper life or a higher life or some other.

But he said, for most of us, once we get, know that if we die, we're going to go to heaven. That's what it's all about. That's all we're interested in.

Is that what the whole thing's about? Thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from hell and take them to heaven when they die. Is that what the angel said? No. Thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sin.

From their sin. And to know to do good and to do it not is sin. That's one of the things that he wants to say.

In other words, light brings responsibility. These people, they've been awakened, they've been convicted, they've been brought to repentance, these people in Ephesians. They had the evidence that they have been born of God and the apostle said, as I found out all of that, I've started to pray for you.

Hey, that's important. To realize when the apostle became concerned. That's when he became concerned for them.

That's when he started to pray. I cease not to make mention of you in my prayers. I'm praying for you, in other words.

I am going to be concerned enough to just continuously hold you up. You see this sovereign, this sovereign God we've been reading and studying. He may entreat his children to care for that which he purposed and he planned.

He may entreat them, but he's going to hold them responsible. You see, apparently, I understand at least, when sinners die, they will appear before the great white throne, where they will discover their names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. And they will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and go off into that place of eternal estrangement from God.

When saints die and at that day, they will appear also, but not at the same tribunal. The great white throne is reserved for the ones whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. Ones who have been born of God and who've been redeemed are going to appear before someplace else.

That's the bema, the judgment seat of Christ, where everyone may receive of the things he's done in his body, whether they be bad or good. And only those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life, only

those who have been redeemed, will go to the bema. And the bema, that place where rewards are given out, is the place where we're going to give an account of what we've done with our lives since we came to know Christ.

A sin. Certainly, it would be rude. It would be unnecessary.

It would be I don't have to do it. There's provision made for me not to do it, but I stand here and I mutilate this nice death. I pound a nail into it.

That's what a Christian does when he sins. He mutilates something that the Lord has made whole, made complete. Past sins are gone, remembered against the snow more forever.

But now, having become a child of God, he mutilates it. Pounds a nail into it. Now, in repentance and in confession, as a child of God, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and judge.

We judge it, we confess it, we forsake it, and the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. And we pull the nail out. We pull the nail out, but did we pull the hole out? No.

Hole's gonna be there. Oh, you can plug it with paste and forget about it, but you examine that and you will find there's a hole in that wood. And at the bema, all the nail holes, that's gonna be rough.

That's gonna be rough. And that means that there will be, there will be nail holes. Or to take another image, it's like a weaving, the warp and the wolf and the shuttle goes back and forth.

The bema, the life is unrolled. The sins will have been forgiven and pardoned, but the break in the weaving will be there. We're going to receive this, but when we confess, they can be forgiven, but we drop their bones.

Well, they certainly, certainly yes. In the sense that see, God's purpose in grace is to make us like Christ. And He's made, He realizes we're flesh.

He remembers us. He knows what does. And therefore, He's able to save unto the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

And a child of God, a true child of God, someone born into the father's family may fall into sin, but the scripture says, born of God, born of sin, because God's seed remains in him and he can't continue to practice sin. He's done it, but God said he's forsaken it and the blood of Jesus has forgiven it. Now, and He's going to receive of the deeds done in the body, whether they be bad or good.

And obviously, we're going to be responsible for all the bad we did that we didn't have to do if we'd availed ourselves of His grace. We're going to be responsible for all the good we did by His grace. We're going to be responsible for all that we could have been if we had availed ourselves of His grace, and all we could have done.

So the apostle, when he's talking to these people at Ephesus, instead of letting them be content, they're in the vestibule, they're in the front hall, they've been born of God, they're in his house, and they're not going to freeze to death in the storm, they're not going to be destroyed, they're not outside anymore. But what he's saying to them is this, listen, dear, dear children of God, babes in Christ, I want you to realize how much more the Father has than just a vestibule at the front door. Sure, you're in the house, but he's got all these other rooms of blessing filled with blessing for you, but you've got to want those blessings.

See, God commands sinners to repent. He entreats the believers to present their bodies, and he suggests that if they want the Holy Spirit will open the eyes of their, God will give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of Christ, that the eyes of their understanding may be opened, that they may know what the Father purposed and the Son provided. You see the difference? This is a sovereign God who sovereignly decides to do it this way.

And who are we to say he made an error? And just because he doesn't scourge us and whip us, because we don't ask the Spirit of God to be unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of Christ, just because he doesn't take a club to us, because we don't present our bodies a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God, just because he doesn't immediately twist our arms and say, listen, don't you know that the eyes of your understanding can be opened, that you can know the things that God has prepared for them that love him? Why are you so indifferent? Don't let go of my arm. Don't twist my arm, Lord. No, the Lord's not going to twist anybody's arm.

He's dealing with children. He's dealing with people born into his family. He's dealing with his own.

Now he takes that attitude toward the sinners, but not to the saints. He's dealing with his children. So what he's saying to the people of Ephesus is this.

I know you're in the best of your heart. I know you're so happy that you're secure from God's wrath. You're so grateful that you're forgiven.

But God has this marvelous house. He knew everything you were going to need to be everything that he wanted. And so he planned everything for you.

He purposed everything for you before the foundation of the world. And then in the fullness of time his son came along and provided everything that the father purposed. And now God the Holy Spirit is willing to work in you everything the father purposed and the son provided.

But now he asks for your heartfelt cooperation. He wants you to join with him. You see the difference? Oh, it's such a difference.

Now you say, well, why did he do it that way? If he'd have done it the other way, boy, then I'd have really taken it to heart. But let me ask you. You know something? It's true of me.

It's true of you too all. We're just as holy as we want to be today. We're just as Christ-like as we want to be.

We're just as spiritual as we want to be. We're just as mature as we want to be. We are the sum of our desires up until today.

Now, let me ask, you feel that the father's finished with you? See, he's going to, one day we're going to awaken the likeness of his son Christ. You feel he's finished with you? Hey, I don't. Maybe you do.

I don't know you well enough to be able to say about you, but I know me well enough to say about me. And I know he's got a lot of work to do. I thank God that I'm not what I used to be.

I'm sorry that I'm not what I wanted to be by this time. And I've committed myself to make myself totally and completely available to him, to do in me everything he wants to do to make me what he wants me to be. Because I realize he's much more interested in what I am and what I do.

He's more interested in the minister than the ministry. He's more interested in the servant than the servant is. He's more interested in the laborer than in the laborer.

You're his main concern. Not what you're doing, but what you are. And so he's saying to these people that he's praying.

Well, behind him is the Lord Jesus at the right hand of the Father today. And he's praying for you, and he's praying for you by name. What's he asking? That the eyes of your understanding will be opened.

That you will cry, Father, open the eyes of my understanding. That I may know. Give unto me the spirit of wisdom and revelation.

The Spirit, Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Revelation will show me what the Father planned, purposed, and what the Son provided. And as the Spirit of wisdom, he will show me how to appropriate and use what the Father purposed and what the Son provided. Oh, as long as we're in time.

We got a whole new week. Isn't that thrilling? God's at least brought us to Sunday. I hope I'll see you all next Lord's Day.

But he's at least brought us to today. You know what that ought to mean? At beginning today, we ought to say, Lord, I want this week to be the greatest spiritual progress in my life. Open the eyes of my understanding.

Lord, become unto me, blessed Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of Christ. Of what the Father purposed and the Son provided. Let the eyes, where eye has not seen or ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him, but God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit.

Oh, blessed Holy Spirit, reveal unto me. Reveal unto me what you want me to appropriate, what you want me to do. That's the tenderness of it.

There is a sovereign God now who stooped in his sovereignty to wait for you and wait for me. Isn't that marvelous? That this one who reigns and rules and governs the universe should wait for us. To get through with our toys and our games.

You know, silly little pounding of nails here and there. Breaking of the thread to mar the fabric to rob him of the praise of the glory of his grace. He'll forgive us.

He'll pardon us. But I don't want to go on doing that to my last day to you. When we were a young couple, our first child, we had a playpen.

It was great. I used to think my wife ought to get into it and leave the children outside, but we put the kids in it. She needed the protection, not them.

I always wondered why we gave them vitamins and we took tranquilizers. It ought to be the other way around. But still, Paul said, in effect, a free translation.

I don't want to go to my dizabima dragging a playpen filled with spiritual infants. I don't want to be responsible for having brought into the world and taken into heaven a lot of people that were born and then never grew after that. I want you to grow up into Christ in all things.

So we all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ unto a mature man. We have everything the Father planned in purpose. You know, one day we're going to go home.

The Father takes us down to the warehouse of his glory that he filled before the foundation of the world and he opens a drawer with your name on it. You know something? When he opens mine, I'd like to look into it and find that the cupboard is bare. There isn't one thing that he planned and purposed that I didn't appropriate in you.

Wouldn't you hate to go there and find it shelf after shelf after shelf filled with blessings that he prepared to help you through the trip through time and you didn't care enough to even it's like getting the pink sheet from the post office parcel and you don't you get them let them accumulate. You don't even go to the post office to find out what's ascending. Well, that's another that's another that's another aspect and another will and that's another that's the next cupboard.

This is a cupboard. This is the cupboard of blessing and that's the cupboard of of of things that we he's saying Now we talk about the first I'll tell you friend if you don't empty this first cover you're probably not going to have much in the second one. It's only as we avail ourselves of the provisions of our his grace that our lives can be fruitful to his glory.

Well, there you go. Sovereign. He reigns, he rules, he decides how to do it.

And he's just as much sovereign when he beseeches you as when he commands you. Father, we ask thy blessing now upon this thy people. You know us, you see us, you find us where we are.

And we ask Lord that thou would be pleased this week to stir our hearts with a new hunger and a new yearning and a new longing to be like Christ. We will not be satisfied with ourselves until he is satisfied with us. May the lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering.

Is the cry of our hearts today.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/2/SID2950.mp3>

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