

# Purpose

by Paris Reidhead

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*The sermon emphasizes that God's grace not only saves us from sin but also empowers us to live a victorious and abundant life in Christ.*

**Duration:** 42:33

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 10:13, Ephesians 6:10

**Topics:** "Purpose"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the need for discipline in bringing our thoughts into the captivity of Christ. He emphasizes that the enemy plots to keep us from experiencing the power and freedom that comes from following Christ. The preacher encourages the audience to study and apply the teachings of Jesus in their lives. He also highlights the importance of being intentional in our pursuit of holiness, spirituality, and Christlikeness.

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## Transcript

God's purpose in grace was not just to save you from sin and the penalty of sin and the consequences of sin. We see here that he wanted to give you life, and that to be a rich, full, abundant life. Now in many years of counseling with God's dear children and ministering to them the word as best I could and he could enable, I found that so few of us, including myself, have actually lived day by day and year by year that life that's ours in Christ.

Why? Why is it that we have such marvelous provisions of grace, so perfectly adapted to our every need, and we are so content to get by on just a portion of what he intended and what he provided? That's the question I'd ask myself tonight, and ask you. You see, this one, this good shepherd, had a plan. Let's look at it for a moment, the shepherd's plan.

What was it? Well, obviously, as we saw this morning, if you were with us, it was to save us, to save us from sin. Shall we go back and review our definition? That sin, as a matter of life principle, is the committal of the will to the policy and practice of pleasing oneself without proper regard for the will of God and the rights of others. Now, I'll back out of that and drive in again.

Perhaps you need that. I do, at least. Sin is the committal of the will to the principle and the policy and the practice of pleasing oneself without due and proper regard for the will of God and the rights of others.

In other words, a sinner is a traitor against just and proper government. God governs to ensure the greatest happiness and blessedness of everyone, and the sinner governs his life to ensure his own happiness at the expense of anyone or everyone. I'll do what I want to do, becomes the soliloquy of the sinner.

I'll get what I want to get, regardless from whom I take it. I'll do what I want to do. Selfishness, self-will, self-pleasing, these are synonyms for sin.

And the sinner is one who has just said, I'm going to live my life, govern it to please myself, and decide how to be happy. Well, if you explore that further, then you discover that not only is he a traitor, but he's also a rebel. It's not just an act of treason in betraying just government, but it's a lifetime of continuous rebellion against this government that seeks to ensure the rights of everyone.

And not only is it treason and rebellion, but press it a step further and you discover it's anarchy. A sinner says, I will do what I want to do. I'll please me.

And anarchy is, of course, the reason why, that anarchial spirit is the reason why God has appointed government, because he realizes it's necessary if man is to survive on the planet, that there should be government. Because in the heart of all of us is this principle of anarchy, of sin. And not only is sin treason and rebellion and anarchy, but it's also transgression.

God puts particular laws to protect. And when the one who's committed himself to pleasing himself sees such a fence, then he cuts it. When I was a boy living on the farm in Minnesota, we were always frightened of the hunting season in the fall.

We went around and put up freshly painted signs. First we said, no trespassing. They shot those off.

The next time we said, there are cattle in here, no trespassing. And finally we said, please. And they shot that off too.

You cut the fence, you know, the hunter come in, take out, didn't want to tear his brand-new hunting coat, and so he'd take his pliers and cut the fence, fresh cuts, walk through, and then we'd get a telephone call a couple of days later, say, four or five heifers down here. Someone says they look like some they've seen at your place, or you've lost some heifers. And so we'd have to go down to the truck and bring them back.

Transgression. There was something there that belonged to another, no regard, no respect, just cut the fence and go in and take it. Damage, loss, never mind.

Sinner is a transgressor. He goes across. But then there's something else said about him, and that is that he is an enemy.

You see, the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God. Neither indeed can be.

It's the mind, it's the attitude, it's the purpose. Now, thou shalt call his name for he shall save his people from their sin, from their sins. He shall save his people.

This is what we read here. The, I am the door, said the Lord Jesus. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.

From what? Well, the wages of sin is death. We explored it in some detail this morning. The penalty of sin is death.

First, physical death, separation of the spirit from the body. Spiritual death, separation of the human spirit from fellowship with God. Legal death, separation from all expectation of anything from God save justice and judgment.

And finally, eternal death, separation from God in that place that he is described as hell, the lake of fire and brimstone that burneth forever and ever. Now, we find that we are to be saved from the penalty of our sin. Certainly this is the case.

He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from the penalty of our sins. He was made to be sin for us and thus he died in our place and in our stead. So the good shepherd, this one, the Lord Jesus Christ, gave his life for the sheep that he might save us from the penalty of what we have done.

He went to the cross in your place, in mine. The Father saw him as you, as me, and did to him what is justice required that he do to you and to me. And he died for us.

In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. For when we were yet without strength and we had nothing that we could offer, he died for us. But that's not all.

He not only died to save us from the penalty of what we have done, we read in the Word that he also died to save us from the power of sin, from the power it had over us. You see, when you came to Jesus Christ, you came into the Christ, saw him dying for you, you received him as dying in your place instead, you were forgiven. You believed for forgiveness, you received forgiveness.

But if your experience was in any wise parallel to mine, you discovered shortly after you had the first joy of that burden being lifted, that sense of estrangement from God being gone, that joy and peace that came through believing in Christ, it wasn't long, I say, until you also discovered you'd carried a traitor into the Christian life, or at least I did. Now, I had renounced sin. My purpose was to please God.

But I early discovered, just a few weeks after that wonderful realization that I had passed from death to life, that I had, that something was amiss. And I realized that, that I was still capable of doing the thing. See, I had lied to my parents when I was a boy.

I was just 14 when I came to know the Lord. Oh, I was 12 when I was taken into the church, but I was taken in, really. I was the situation.

I answered about a half a dozen questions with the proper answer and became a member of the church, but nothing else. But we were living on the farm, and my, this particular day, we were, during the drought back in the, in the Depression, in the period of drought, this was in 30, 33. And I was getting up early in the morning, going out at three o'clock, harnessing the horses, and getting out with the cultivator, along with my father and a hired man.

We, it was just too hot to try to cultivate. We were trying to save the corn, and we could only work till about 8.30 or 9, and we had to come in. So, we were getting up early and going out just as soon as we could see the, the corn rows.

And this particular day was 8 o'clock. The horses just were exhausted, and I didn't even have to tie them. I just walked off and left them.

They were too tired to move, and took the mason jar wrapped in burlap off the back of the cultivator seat, and started into the house. And just as I came around the corner, my mother came out. She said, Oh, Sonny, I'm so glad to see you.

I've got some errands. Well, right about then, what I needed least in all the world were some errands. And so, I did something that maybe you don't know about.

I sassed my mother. And I spoke like that, and she looked at me, and she spoke again, and I said something else. She spoke once more, and I said something else, just as quick as a whiplash.

And she looked like I'd struck her with a whip. And she stopped, and she just said this, Sonny, I thought you were a Christian. And she turned and walked in, and the door closed softly behind her.

And I walked on toward the pump. I took a hold of the handle. I couldn't stroke it.

I set the jar down, and walked out down to the barn between the rangers, climbed a ladder up into the hay mow, found a valley in the hay, and threw myself down the hay and sobbed like a baby. I said, Lord, I don't know what this did to me, but I know that you showed me that I wasn't a Christian, because I dishonored my parents and many other things. And now here I've done it again.

And I just, just broke before the Lord. And while I was there, telling him my sin, just overwhelmed by this, this shocking thing that had taken place, in my mind I began to hear the echo of a song that we'd been singing at the camp meeting where I'd come to know the Lord. Peace, perfect peace in this dark world of sin.

The blood of Jesus whispers peace within. And I knew I was forgiven and pardoned. And I knew what I had to do, to get up and go down the ladder and go to the house and tell my mother that I was sorry, that God had forgiven me, and would she, and then do the errands, and then fill the bottle, and then go back to the field.

And as I walked back, after having done this, I went a very much sadder, wiser young man, and I discovered I'd carried into the Christian life a traitor which would betray me. You see, I'd carried all the habits of thought, all the attitudes I'd acquired before I had been forgiven. I'd carried into this Christian life with me the responses that I'd learned and so diligently schooled myself in, to deal with situations.

Now here I was, a child of God, with the assurance, the witness of his Spirit, and yet caught in this pressure, with a heart set to please God, and yet with responses, and memories, and attitudes, and habits of thought, all of this had come in as unclaimed, unwanted baggage. But it was there, and I had to deal with it. Now I think this is the experience.

The question I have to ask, did Jesus Christ just die to save us from hell, or did he die to save us from temptation? Did he die to save us from just the penalty of sin, or did he also die to save us from the power of sin in our lives? Obviously, if he just died to save us from the penalty of sin, that's marvelous, and there's no need for us to worry. But if the Word should teach that he died to save us from the power of sin, then it's tremendously important to us that we should discover this, and know this, and learn how. I was speaking to a group of students up in New England some years ago, when I was pastoring in New York

City at a retreat up in New Hampshire.

And I went back again the next year, and one of the young men was there. I came in a little early, and he was sitting in front of the fireplace, and he said, Oh, hello there. He said, Are you going to give us the same stuff you gave us last year? Well, I said, I don't know.

Should I or shouldn't I? He said, I hope not. Well, I said, I'd better find out what that stuff is, and maybe we can do something about it. What was it I gave you last? He said, You talked about the Jesus dying to save us from the power of sin.

I said, Yes, and I'd kind of planned on giving you some of the same stuff. Well, he said, Don't do it. It doesn't work.

Well, now I said, This is important, because if it doesn't work, I surely don't want to do it. What is it? What did I say? Well, last year you gave us that verse that says, There's no temptation that's overtaken you, except that which is common to man. And God is faithful, will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with a temptation make a way of escape that you'll be able to bear.

He said, See, I know the verse. I said, That's fine. I see you do.

But he said, It doesn't work. Well, I said, Tell me about it. Well, I went home, and I had some areas in my life where it failed.

You convinced me that Jesus had died to save us from the power of sin, as well as from the penalty of it, and I was tempted. And I quoted that verse, and I quoted it, and I quoted it, and still didn't get any help. And he said, I just gave up after a few weeks.

It doesn't work. Well, I said, Let's open our Bibles. We open to the verse.

I said, Read it. I said, What's the way of escape? He said, The verse. Oh, no, no.

I said, It's not what the way of escape is. That's just a verse that tells you there is a way of escape. Now, have you bothered to find out what it is? Well, he said, I thought that's what it was.

I said, There's no mystery in this verse. You don't just get some kind of hypnotic effect from it. You realize it isn't superstition.

He's telling you there's a way of escape. And I went over and I put the switch on for a couple of times. I said, Look, the lights are going on.

I said, So what? I said, Now they're going off. Look at that. I said, How does it happen? Do we get down on our knees and cry, Oh, ohms, watts, and volts, come on? Is that how we get the lights on? He said, No, it's principles.

I said, That's what we're talking about here, principles. Now, I said, Are you willing to admit that maybe I was a poor teacher and didn't communicate, or maybe you were a poor student and you didn't remember? But what he's talking about is a way of escape. And that's what I want you to understand.

He shall be saved. From what? From the penalty of sin, of course. But also from the power of sin.

He shall save his people from their sins, not just from hell, from their sins. Because if the Christian is going to live a happy life, he can't live in constant fear that the next time he's tempted, he's going to violate every pledge that he's made to God. He's got to have some way of escape, or else he's just a shuttlecock that's being beat back and forth.

There's got to be victory. So, he died to save us from the penalty of sin, and he died to save us from the power of sin, but he also died to save us from ourselves. You see, we're our own worst enemy.

And he not only wanted to save us from these other things, but he also wanted to save us from ourselves. Well, thinking so much of the sin aspect as I am, oh, disposition in another sense. Oh, perhaps you're very timid, and because of that timidity you're reluctant to live the kind of life.

Or perhaps you grew up in a home where you weren't given an opportunity, or many other problems, any of these things. You see, whom the Son makes free is free indeed. How many times I've gone to someone as a pastor and said, would you be willing? Oh, I couldn't do that.

I've never done that. Well, why don't you do it once? Oh, no, I wouldn't do that. Well, what? Well, I've never done it.

Isn't it amazing? When they were born, they'd never done anything once. And everything they've done since then has been an improvement over that first evidence of life. You'd never learn to feed yourself.

Your mother fed you, and you got along pretty well, and you reached out and took the spoon. You don't remember. She does.

And then you got it up and flipped it at her. That's where the first memory began. Then the second memory was when you pulled it up and you couldn't find that hole in the front of your face.

Your mother didn't have any problem, but you couldn't. You know how it worked. And finally, you got tired of the spoon, it didn't work, so you put your fist in and tried to get it in.

And when that didn't work, you took the bowl and put it on the top of your head. There was a hole there somewhere, let it find its own. But this was, if you don't eat that way now, then you have improved.

You've done something you've never done. Oh, how many people have gone through life, just crippled and paralyzed by these attitudes and dispositions and traits, by complexes and all these other things that are there to interfere, to hinder, to rob you. I think of Christian parents.

I'll never forget a time years ago when I was having a conference in Ohio, actually, and this young people's worker at our table said, I wish you'd pray for so-and-so. Do you know so-and-so named a boy in his teens? I guess 15 perhaps. He's very, very surly and bitter and withdrawn and comes from a Christian home, and I wish you'd pray for him.

Well, I must confess that I didn't do any particular praying. I was speaking each day. But at any rate, the second week, we were there for two weeks.

And the second week after the service, I had not been doing the preaching, but a young man came up and said, Mr. Redhead, would you come over to the young people's tabernacle? So-and-so named this boy wants to talk to you. They'd been required to attend the morning Bible hour where I was speaking. So I went in and we went to a back room and there were three or four people in there, and this young man was

seated.

He said, would you folks go out? I want to talk to the preacher alone. So they went out, the door closed, and he looked at me. He said, do you know my folks? I said, yes.

He said, what do you know about them? Well, nothing more. I've just met them here. He said, do you know they're the biggest hypocrites in the world? I said, no, I didn't know that.

He said, do you know that when they're around you, preachers, they're so nice that butter wouldn't melt in their mouth? But when they get home with us, they cut us down. They're sarcastic and critical and they're fussing at each other. He said, my folks are the biggest hypocrites.

And he started to cry. He said, Mr. Ed, all I wanted was just to get away from home, just to get away. He said, I'm here and I've been listening to you and these other preachers.

He said, I want to be saved. I need Jesus. Well, I'm afraid he won't be able to do any better for me than he did for my folks, and I don't want to be that kind of a Christian.

And he put his head down on his arm and started to sob. Now, I'm prepared to say that if those parents had died, they'd have gone to heaven, they were saved from the penalty of sin. I may even be prepared to say that they knew something about victory as a theory and perhaps in practice, but I'm saying that for all practical purposes, they had no influence at all in the lives of their children.

They were wasting every day, because they'd never, they'd never understood that the Lord Jesus wanted to save them from the tyranny of their own personalities. Oh, I know a little about that. 1945, my wife and I went to Africa as missionaries.

I'd been seven years after high school getting ready to go. And I thought I was ready. Had linguistics and been prepared in college and Bible Institute.

I got to Africa and I found that there wasn't anything in an ocean voyage to make you like praying hide. I figured something was going to happen. At home when I was carrying a school load and working to keep us going and all, preaching, I just said, well, when I get to Africa, then I'll be spiritual.

Then I'll take time in prayer and Bible reading. But right now, of course, even the Lord doesn't expect that. It's too hard.

When I got to Africa, I found that the ocean voyage hadn't done anything. Well, it made me seasick, but hadn't helped spiritually any. And so after a few months there, I was quite disillusioned with me.

I wasn't what I ought to be. And so the only way I could live with myself was to prove nobody else is what they ought to be. You know that? I mean, if you are right to just look around, nobody else is, then you're comfortable.

And so unconsciously I did that, and I discovered after a few months in Africa that I had carried with me a very critical mind and a censorious spirit and a sarcastic tongue. Oh, I knew I'd been saved from the penalty of sin, but I'd never been saved from me, from me, from these habits and attitudes of thought and these dispositions. And it just, just marked my whole ministry there.

And I had to write letters and apologize and ask forgiveness about you. Now, the Lord Jesus once said, I come that you might have life, that you might have it abundantly. Live in the daily tyranny that somebody says something and you'll become sarcastic.

That's abundant life. Oh, there has to be something better than that. He shall be saved, saved from the penalty of sin, saved from the power of sin, saved from his traits and attitudes and dispositions, made to be free to be everything God wants him to be.

So you're talking about too much. No, I'm not. I'm saying that the shepherd had a plan, wonderful, wonderful plan, to release us into the glorious liberty that's ours as children of God.

We ought to understand that. We ought to know that. Oh, it was more than that.

It was to save us from the futility of trying to live the Christian life in our own energy. You know, I think it was Reginald Wallace of England, or Frederick Wood, I'm not sure. I think it was Reginald Wallace that on one occasion said, the happiest day of my Christian life was the day I discovered I couldn't live it.

Have you discovered that? Well, I got news for you. If you haven't, your neighbors and your family have. They know.

Oh, yes, they're aware. In fact, you can't live it. Well, you see, it's his life.

You can't live his life any more than David could fight in Saul's armor. And his plan wasn't for you to wear yourself into a nervous wreck trying to act like Christ and imitate Christ. These light bulbs up here and this didn't have a conference this afternoon and say, oh, how in the world can we ever rub our little filaments together fast enough to generate electricity to dispel the darkness? All they have to do is abide in the socket, just stay in relationship, and then there's an energy that can flow through them.

And he wanted to save us from the futility of trying to live this life and serve in the mere energy of our own personalities. And sometimes it took me years and years to even begin to understand that just human and nervous energy is not the way God gets his work done. And he wanted to save us from the futility of striving just in the efforts of ourselves.

He wanted us, you see, his plan was to live his life in us. He said, I will dwell in them, I'll walk in them, and I'll be a father unto them. Oh, the Savior had a wonderful plan.

But then, remember, we've been talking here about a thief who came in to steal and to kill and to destroy. So when you're talking about the Savior's plan for, the shepherd's plan for his own, you've got to talk about Satan's plot. Because he had a plot.

He had a scheme. And his scheme was to keep the children of God from the heritage, keep them from entering into that which had been provided for them. Oh, how many different ways he uses.

One is to get them content with less than is best, and another is to get them to be too busy to study the word. And another is to give them the illusion that if they listen and agree, that they've got what they heard. That's like taking a shower with a raincoat on.

You're there where all the water is falling, but you're not being benefited by it. And I'm convinced through years and years of preaching that that's what happened. People listen and they agree, but well, they don't do anything with it.

I was speaking in Atlanta, Georgia, and dear Aunt Harriet Williams saw me, and she said, come to tea. She was about 86 or 87. And I went to tea, and she said, now I want to share with you two things.

Wherever you go, wherever you preach, will you tell the two children of God two things for me? Two words that are lost to our generation. One of them is meditation. Oh, our people have lost the art of meditating.

They read, they read the scripture, and they read books sometimes, and they read sermons, and they listen, but they don't think. And she looked at me, and she said, brother Ethan, God can only work in our lives the truth we've heard when we do it his way. And he made us capable of meditating.

And to meditate is to ruminate on the truth until it fits you, and it becomes yours. And it isn't how much you can accumulate. It's getting the truth that you need next, and thinking about it.

Thinking, and thinking, and thinking about it, until, as she said, meditation, and then the last word was revelation. Now I think that one of the Satan's plot is to get us to be superficial and busy, and so that we don't have time to meditate, and we don't wait for God to reveal. And we think that if we can quote the scripture, that we've experienced the scripture.

And we become superficial, and we become busy, and we substitute activity for reality. And all of this breeds for weakness, and so what the great privilege that is ours in Christ, the heritage that's ours, purchased with his blood, that doesn't become ours experientially. How wonderful it is to take a little truth, one little truth is enough to change a life.

One little idea is enough to revolutionize a life, and change a life. But we don't use it. We don't seize on it.

We don't take it. I read somewhere that any idea firmly fixed in the mind through repeated affirmation, automatically becomes a plan or a blueprint, which an unseen power uses in directing our energies toward the achieving of the objectives that are named in the plan. Well, now, if there's truth in that, and there is, then can't you see how important it is for you to lay hold of the truth? You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Take some truth, just any truth that's there. I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. Lay hold on it, and in the face of the problems you're facing, and the difficulties you're facing, and these matters of disposition, and traits, and whatever it is, that truth then becomes a dynamic lever in your life.

Just being able to quote it doesn't do it. I recall years ago being with a lady, she said, come with me, I want to talk to you. We went out on the porch in this lovely home in Georgia, and she said that the doctors told me that I'm going to have a certain condition that will come, and can you give me some scripture that will help me? Why? I said, yes, I think perhaps I can.

I said, would you open your Bible to Ephesians? Oh, no, no, not Ephesians. I've already studied Ephesians. There's nothing in Ephesians for me.

I know Ephesians. You'll have to go somewhere else. What do you do in a situation like that? I just said, well, let's have a word of prayer.

We prayed, and we got up and left. There's no hope. A person says, I know Ephesians.

Why, it's like being in the Kimberly diamond mine. You know, it's just marvelous. It's rich with truth for us.

But I think this is part of a plot of the enemy to rob us of our heritage in Christ, to make us superficial and shallow, and thus to deprive Christ of seeing the truth work in our lives. And you can do something about that. You can.

Isn't it amazing? The only thing God gave you complete power of is your mind. That's right. You can't control what you see or what you hear or what you smell, even what you feel.

But one thing you can control, and that's what you think. That's why he said, as a man thinketh, so is he. If you're going to grow into the grace and knowledge of Christ and to appropriate what your shepherd purchased for you, then you're going to have to overcome all the pressures that are exerted to cause your thoughts to scatter and your mind to be like a little puppy.

Have you ever seen a puppy that hadn't been trained, and it ran here and ran there and scampered there and went there? Well, that's the way our minds are at times. They just flip from pillar to post, and we don't bring our thoughts into the captivity of Christ. And I believe this is part of a plot of an enemy.

So, the shepherd had a plan to save us from the power of penalty of sin, from the power of sin, from the tyranny of our own personalities and traits, from the futility of walking in our own energy, and he gave to us this wonderful, wonderful declaration of it. But if it's to become yours, then you're going to have to exercise the discipline of finding out where you are and what you need and what applies next, and then to study it. Right now, my 15-year-old son David and I are in a project.

I've been too busy, I'm afraid. I've been working terribly hard. I was last year out of the country, as I said this morning, 31 weeks out of 52.

And I looked at my son, and we have six children, two are married and two daughters, and David's home, and he's lonely. I'm afraid I've neglected him. So, we're in a project.

I found out that he took shop, and he made a beautiful lamp out of a piece of cedar, and we've got a little bit of a building, a library. So, now he and I are studying PowerShop tools, and we're spending our time going to the makers, and I don't know, we're probably going to end up going into partnership. And, in other words, we're thinking about it, and we're reading about it.

Now, if it wasn't for David, I'm past the point of being particularly intrigued by a lathe or a drill press or a jointer or any of these things. My 15-year-old son is vitally interested in it, and so all of a sudden it becomes terribly important to me, because it's important to him. And so, I'm reading about them, I'm studying about them, I'm taking time with them.

Oh, it started years ago, when Sonny Parrish Jr. was 15, 15 or 10 years ago, 11 years ago, 12, something like that. He said, gee, Dad, I'll be glad when I'm old enough to play golf, then I can have a little time with you. I've been out playing golf with some preacher friends.

The next day, I put an ad in the paper, trade, one set of, complete set of golf clubs for a drill press. And I got a drill press, and I put it in the basement. Sonny and Jimmy went down, boy, they drilled holes in everything.

And then we got a radial iron saw, and then we started to work together. But it bound me to them, and now we're doing it again. Well, what am I saying is, what am I telling you? It's important, if it's important to do it with him, and if it's power tools, then all of a sudden, I've got to learn about power tools.

I'm reading specifications, I'm reading descriptions, I'm reading manuals. Why? Because it's important for me to do something with my boy. You understand? And so, if you are going to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, your heavenly Father wants to do something with you.

But you've got to care enough to want, and care enough to respond, and he'll go with you. He'll go with you. He'll take you into the Word.

He'll, he'll show you. His purpose is to make you like his son. You aren't going to have to do this alone.

All he wants is that you care enough. He's saying it. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Look full of his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. You see, friend, tonight you're just as holy as you want to be. You're just as spiritual as you want to be.

You're just as Christlike as you want to be. Tonight, you are the son of all your desires up until tonight. Well, the function of preaching is twofold.

It's to comfort the afflicted, and it's to afflict the comfortable. And if you're here comfortable with less than the Lord Jesus wants you to be, it's my job to sort of stir you up and make you uncomfortable. Then, having done that, to say, listen, all your heavenly Father needs to see is that you're hungry, that you want.

And just as I'm spending time with David, taking him around to see one manufacturer's line and others, we're reading, if you'll just show the least bit of interest, your heavenly Father will reach down, take you by his hand, and guide you. He'll bring people all the way around the world just to open the truth to you, if he sees a desire in your heart. Oh, to be like thee.

Oh, to be like thee. Blessed Redeemer, pure as thou art, come in thy fulness. Come in thy pureness.

Stamp thine own image deep on my heart. That's what we're talking about. Well, let's think about it.

Open your heart and say, O Lord Jesus, show me the worst about myself while there's still time enough to do something about it. Where better place could we have than here together? We'll go right on from this point in the morning and tomorrow night. The Christian secret of a happy life.

Son of he's come, said Christ, that you might have life and you might have it more abundantly. Father, we thank you and praise you for the gift of thy grace in the Lord Jesus. Oh, how marvelous it is to realize that you knew everything we needed, even long before we discovered it, and you provided everything that we'd need in thy Son.

You'll supply all of our needs according to your riches in glory by Christ Jesus. And he was the good shepherd who gave himself for his sheep. And with himself thou has freely given us all things.

So tonight, stir us up to understand what this wonderful word saved means, not just from the penalty of sin but from the power of sin and the problems of personality. And from the possibility of living in the emptiness of our own strength instead of the power of thy resurrection light. And bring to us tonight the realization of our responsibility to focus our thoughts and our attention and our time and to discipline our energies in the areas that thou has shown us thou art working with us.

So put thy blessing upon this people, we ask. And we pray, Lord, that those who have special need will make it known to thee. And if thou wouldst have it done that some of us share with them, they'll be aware of how willing we are to do so.

For now may thy grace and thy mercy and thy peace be and abide upon us, each one now until Jesus comes. Amen.

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