

Wonders of God-03 in Redemption

by William MacDonald

The sermon highlights the wonders of God in redemption, emphasizing the mysterious work of the Spirit of God and the role of prayer in salvation.

Duration: 46:25

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 3:6, Matthew 6:33, John 14:6, Romans 10:17, Hebrews 4:12, 2 Peter 3:9

Topics: "Redemption"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares several stories of individuals who had encounters with God and experienced life-changing transformations. One story is about a man who was given only a few hours to live and requested that someone take money from his pocket to pay his rent and bring him a book. The book turned out to be a Bible, and upon discovering his mother's name in it, he fell to his knees and accepted Jesus as his Savior. Another story is about an evangelist who obeyed a prompting from the Holy Spirit to proclaim, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,' even though there was no one around to hear it. The sermon also mentions a young man named Peter Jenkins who was on a journey across America but was drawn to a gospel crusade in Mobile, Alabama, where he encountered God's presence and had a change of heart. The sermon emphasizes the power of God to transform lives and calls listeners to seek a personal encounter with Him.

Transcript

Not only creating things, but God running this universe. And what a wonderful work that is. This morning I'd like to talk to you about the wonders of God in redemption.

That is, in saving souls. Which do you think is the greatest of all of those wonders that I've given you? Well, some people think the wonders of God in redemption are the greatest of all. Just as God's original creation is filled with cargos of wonders, so is his new creation.

It'll take all eternity, it'll take all eternity to reveal the wonderful way in which God tracked down sinners and brought them to him. So, if you're saved by the grace of God, you'll get an opportunity then to tell your testimony. One of my favorite writers is J. H. Jowett, and he believes that the wonders of God in redemption are far greater than the wonders of God in creation.

Let me read to you what he says. The greatest wonders are not in nature, but in grace. A regenerated soul is a greater marvel than the marvel of the springtime.

A transfigured faith is a deeper mystery than a sunlit garden. To read graces in a life once scorched and blasted by sin is more wonderful than to grow flowers on a cinder heap. If we want to see the reality of surpassing wonders, we must look into a soul that has been born again and is now in vital union with the living Christ.

Even the angels watch the sight with ever-deepening awe and praise. It's wonderful when you think about it because of the varieties of experiences that people have. Everyone, every Christian in the room this morning, was saved in one sense in the same way.

You were saved by grace through faith. You were saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ apart from any works of your own. And yet, the steps leading up to it are different in every case.

No two cases exactly alike. Now, who but God could do that? Who but God could do that? Your testimony isn't like mine, and mine isn't like yours. The steps leading up to our salvation are as different as the design of snowflakes in a winter blizzard.

Some people are saved as adults. Some people are saved as children. Some people are saved from the gutter.

Some people are saved from the cathedral. It's really wonderful when you stop to think of it. Conviction of sin comes to some people like a roaring lion, and to some people it comes like a moth against the side of their teeth.

It really does. Some people are saved the first time they hear the gospel. Not many.

Not many. But some people are saved the first time they hear the gospel. Some people are saved after years and years and years of hearing the gospel.

No two experiences quite alike. When we get to heaven, I think we're going to learn that behind most, if not every case of conversion, somebody prayed. I don't know.

Well, I can't think of many whom I know who couldn't look back and find somebody who didn't pray. Most of you here know Eric Shorkin. I said, Eric, who prayed for you? And he said, I don't know anybody who prayed for me.

Yet one day I was talking to his mother on the phone, and she let her guard down. And she told me that Eric's grandfather and grandmother in Philadelphia were Christians, and that the wedding gift they gave to Eric's mother and father was a Bible. Somebody prays for Eric.

He didn't even know it until I told him. She had never told him that. That's true.

Behind every genuine case of conversion, I think it's safe to say that somebody prayed. It may have been a grandmother. It may have been a mother wearing out her knees in prayer for that prodigal son.

When Jesus was on earth, it was mostly trials and difficulties that brought people to him. Not many came to him in the sunshine of life. They came to him with diseases, you know.

In a way, he really came down to a hospital with a men's ward and a children's ward and a woman's ward and all the different kinds of wards. It was there. And he said that.

He said, they that are holy, not a physician. They that are sick, I've not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. It's our need that drives us to the Savior.

And so I want to think with you this morning about the marvelous moving of the Spirit of God, where the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, so is every one who is born of the Spirit. The mysterious, marvelous, miraculous work of the Spirit of God. Now, some of the testimonies I'm going to give you today, some of the stories I'm going to give you are dramatic.

All of them are dramatic. And you might listen and say, well, mine wasn't as dramatic as that. Well, neither was mine, to tell you the honest truth.

My conversion wasn't a dramatic conversion. But I know I'm saved, because I know I'm believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. And I know the time generally when it happened, and I think you should be able to look back to a time in your life when you were convicted of sin, and when you reached out your empty hand and received Christ as your Savior.

You should be able to. The Spirit of God doesn't come into your life gradually. If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he's none of His.

The Spirit of God comes in like that, and you're born again when He does. Let me tell you about the hippie who became happy. I think I told you about him before, some of you anyway.

A young fellow down living in a cave in Palm Springs, California. Burnt out from drugs, alcohol, and sex. Had they satisfied him? Of course they hadn't satisfied him.

And he's sitting there in a damp, dark cave in Palm Springs, California, and he's at the end. And he cried, Oh, God, if there is a God, reveal Yourself to me, or I'm going to take my life. Ten minutes later, a young fellow walked by the mouth of the cave, looked in, saw him, and said, Hi, mind if I speak to you about Jesus? You know the rest of the story.

That was a divine appointment, wasn't it? The fellow led him to Christ. That fellow went on to become useful for the Lord in a prison ministry. Hi, mind if I speak to you about Jesus? I want to draw some lessons from these testimonies, from these stories.

The lesson I draw from that is based on John 7, 17. Nobody has ever prayed that prayer without having it answered. Nobody.

Because it says in John 7, 17, If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak for myself. Jesus said, If you're really anxious to know, you'll know. I like that.

That fellow was anxious to know, and he knew. Years ago, there was a young fellow in India. His name was Sundar Singh, and he was brought up in a Sikh family.

This is the story of the Sikh who sought and found. He was brought up in a Sikh family in the Punjab area of India. His mother was a very devout woman, Sikh, not Christian.

He was more interested in making money than in religion. He was not very religious. The government school was kind of far away from where they lived, so Sundar began to go to the Christian school rather than the government school.

But his life came unglued when he was the age of 14 and his mother died. All his castles crumbled when his mother died. At school, he became a discipline case.

He was just a wild-asses colt there at school. He disrupted classes. He refused to read the Bible and caused trouble on a regular basis.

Finally, they had had enough, and he had to transfer to the government school. And then he became the ringleader of a gang intent on breaking up the Christian school and driving out the teachers. They stoned the open-air preachers, and they threw manure when Christian meetings were in progress.

Even his father was shocked to see the way his son was going, the turn of events in his son's life. Sundar was brought low with malaria and deep depression, and he asked to be readmitted to the Christian school. He was now more subdued, but he was still fighting against God, and he and some of his pals bought a New Testament, and they took it home and burned it.

And his father was shocked. His father was really shocked because although his father was a Sikh, he said, You shouldn't burn that book. It's a good book.

He said, I know. He said, Your mother said it was a good book. And finally, Sundar came to Whip's End Corner, came to the same place as that fellow in the cave, and he decided if he couldn't find peace, he would commit suicide.

And so, after closeting himself for three days and three nights, he prayed, that if he didn't get an answer in seven hours, he was going to go out and put his head down on the track where the Lahore train would come by. Before dawn, he rushed into his father's room and he said, I've seen Jesus. Father said, Go back to sleep.

You've had a dream. He said, No, I haven't had a dream. He said, Jesus appeared to me.

He came into my room and said, In Hindustani, how long are you going to persecute me? I've come to save you. You were praying to know the right way. Why don't you take me? I am the way, the truth, and the light.

And he said to his father, I'm now a Christian. He said, I can serve no other master. His father reminded him that only three days before he had burned the Christian book and Sundar stood rigid, and he looked at his hands and he said, These hands did it.

I can never cleanse them of that sin until the day I die. But till that day comes, my life is his. What he didn't know was that when he confessed his sins, that sin too was forgiven.

I hope he learned it in years to come. There you have another case of somebody who really wanted to know, and he just prayed that prayer to God. God revealed himself to him.

God revealed himself to him. You say, what about that vision? Well, in lands where the Bible is not as plentiful and well-known as it is in this country, God reserves the right to appeal, to appear to people. Most Muslims see a vision of the Lord Jesus before they ever get saved.

So when you tell them about Jesus, they say, Well, I know Jesus. How do you know Jesus? Well, he appeared to me in a vision. We're born again, not through corruptible seed, but through incorruptible by the word of God, which lives and abides forever.

I had a friend years ago named Harry Dixon, and he went to MIT. And he had a roommate who was not a believer, and the roommate was antagonistic. And he used to come to Harry with all kinds of arguments, all kinds of contradictions in the Bible, you know, mistakes in the Bible.

And Harry would patiently try to answer all his questions about the Bible. And he kept it up. So finally, Harry said to him one day, Look, have you ever read the Bible? The fellow had to admit that he hadn't.

But that's true. A lot of Bible critics have never read the Bible. So Harry said to him, Look, don't come back to me with any more contradictions in the Bible until you have had the intestinal fortitude to read Paul's letter to the Romans.

And the fellow accepted the challenge. And he read through Paul's letter to the Romans, and he got some answers to his questions, but he got a lot more questions. So he read it through a second time and got some more answers to his questions, but more questions.

He read it a third time. He never came back to Harry Dixon until he was saved for reading the Bible. What's the lesson in that for us? In speaking to others about the Lord, use the Bible, not your own arguments.

A single verse of Scripture is worth more than a thousand arguments. So the Bible people are saved. I get weary of all the personal evangelism that's based so much on human arguments, clever arguments.

No, no, God saves people through the Word of God. And I like those conversions where people are saved just reading the Bible without anybody even talking to them. Well, he wasn't the last critic or the first that was saved through reading the Bible.

Some of you maybe have read the book Who Moved the Stone? Written by a man, his pseudonym is Frank Morrison. And this man started out to disprove the resurrection of Christ. But you know, if you're going to disprove the resurrection of Christ, you better read the Bible.

You better read the narratives and the Gospels that talk about the resurrection of Christ. And he read it. He read the Bible.

He read about the resurrection. He became a convinced believer in the Lord Jesus. And you know, the subtitle of that book is The Book That Refused to be Written.

I like it. I wish that had been the main title. The main title is Who Moved the Stone? The subtitle is The Book That Refused to be Written.

I think that's a good title for it. And, of course, you know the story of Lord Littleton and Gilbert West years ago in England. They decided to disprove the Bible once for all.

One of them said, well, I'll take the conversion of Paul. And the other said, well, I'll take the resurrection of Christ. And, of course, to do that, once again, they had to assemble all this resource material.

And they said, well, we'll get together after so many months. They got together, and they were both Christians when they got together. And one wrote a book classic on the resurrection of Christ.

And the other wrote a book on the conversion of St. Paul. Littleton and West. What is the lesson in this? The lesson is the harder they fight, the harder they fall.

You know, I think God would rather have people like that than people who just agree with everything. You know. You witness to people and say, yeah, well, yeah, that's right.

I think that's the kind of people that the Lord spews out of his mouth honestly. I would that thou were either hot or cold. God can do more with an opponent of Christianity than with somebody who just agrees.

Some of you have heard of Robert Ingersoll. Years ago, he was one of the best-known atheists and a real enemy of Christianity. And one day he said to an ex-governor of Arizona, he said, Lou, you're a good writer.

He said, you've got a good mind. You should write a book once for all discrediting Christianity, he said. You should do that.

And so this man accepted the challenge. And he started to write the book. And he was having increasing difficulty.

And one day he said to his wife, he said, I'm having real trouble writing this book, discrediting Christianity. And she said, why don't you write it from the other standpoint, proving Christianity. And he did.

His name was Lou Wallace. And the book is Ben-Hur, The Tale of the Christ. Marvelous, isn't it? Really marvelous.

You know that that was made into a movie and one of the most popular movies that has ever been written. You know, some people get saved when they have no intention of being saved. Did you know that? It's rather shocking, but it's absolutely true.

Absolutely true. Not too many years ago, I remember it rather vividly, when a young fellow named Peter Jenkins, he lived in upstate New York, and it was at the end of all that Vietnam trouble. And he was disgusted with his country.

And he said, well, I'll give the country one last chance. And so he decided to walk across America. But since winter was coming on, he had to take a southern route from New York.

And he went down south and he was going to go across by Louisiana and up to Oregon, I think. He got as far as Mobile, Alabama. And three fellows he met there invited him to a real wild party.

And he was tempted to go. But he noticed an awful lot of billboards and signs in the city announcing a gospel crusade. And then God began to work on his intellect and his emotions and his will.

And the weather vane was going back and forth. The windmill was going back and forth in his life. Real wild party.

God, he had no... He called these revival crusades Jesus joining. And he had really... But then he felt drawn to go. And instead of going to a real wild party, he went to this crusade.

And a guy named Jim Robeson got up and preached. And he appealed to Peter Jenkins more as a linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys than as a gospel preacher. But he preached with power.

Poor Peter, the only place he could get to sit was down in the very first row. And he felt kind of embarrassed to be on the first row with thousands of people around him there. But he said, well, you

know, I've just come to take pictures anyway.

You know, he just came to take pictures for his trip across America. He kidded himself into that excuse. And so Jim Robeson thundered out the gospel.

And then he gave an invitation. He said, now look, if you want to trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, I want you to come down to the front. And Peter wrote, was that me standing with 200 people down there at the front of the auditorium? He said, yes, that was me.

And he got there and Jim Robeson went over to him and said, now look, I don't want any playing. He said, I want to make sure. I want you to tell me out loud, he said, do you repent of your sins and do you trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? And he made them all say that they did.

He went over the gospel again as clearly as he could make it. And Peter and 200 other people confessed their faith in Jesus Christ. And he said he went out of that auditorium and decided Christian.

He had attended a wilder party than the other wildest party that they could ever think about. And of course, you know, that's been written into a book, Walk Across America. I first read it in National Geographic magazine.

National Geographic kind of sponsored the trip in a way. They were going to pay for his article when he finished. And when he wrote the article for National Geographic, his testimony was as clear as could be.

And they went back and said, you're very nice, but could keep out that religious part. And he said, no testimony, no article. And they printed it.

I have it. I have it. And that issue of National Geographic was one of the three most popular issues of National Geographic that has ever been published.

I wrote to the editor at the time. And I said, thanks very much. This is America at its best.

And he wrote back a very gracious letter to me, very gracious letter to me. Now, Peter Jenkins had no intention of going to Mobile, Alabama and getting saved, did he? And God was there. God was there.

God caught up with him in that auditorium, and he trusted the Lord as his Savior. Mother's prayers, my mother's prayers have followed me. God is really long-suffering.

He's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth. He stands at the heart's door in sunshine and rain and patiently waits an entrance to gain. Sometimes his patience extends over many, many years.

Dwight L. Moody used to tell the story, an unforgettable example of this. One night he preached on Matthew 6.33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. And at the end of the meeting, a fellow came up to him, dejected, despondent, and blue.

And he said, Mr. Moody, he said, when I left home, my mother gave me a Bible. She said she wrote her name in the Bible, and underneath she wrote Matthew 6.33. And she said she made me promise that I would go to church every Sunday. He said my interest was in going out and making money, making a name for myself.

But he said the first Sunday, he said, I went to church. And he said the minister got up and he preached, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. And he said I could tell that the Spirit of God was working in my heart, but he said I wanted to go out and make a name for myself in the world.

He said, Mr. Moody, the next Sunday I went to church. I went to a different church. And he said the man got up to preach, and he took out his text, Matthew 6.33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

He said I still fought against the working of the Spirit of God in my heart. He said I went to a different church the third Sunday, and he said what do you think the text was? He said Matthew 6.33. He said but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. And he said some people around me must have sensed that I was unsaved.

And they crowded around me, and they urged me to trust Christ. But he said I didn't. I went out.

He said, Mr. Moody, 40 years have gone by. He said I've attended church every Sunday for 40 years. But he said I've never heard that verse until tonight.

He said you preach tonight. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. He said, Mr. Moody, do you think there's any hope for me? Forty years.

God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish. Moody assured him that the door of salvation was still open, that the Lord was still standing there without stretched hands, inviting him to enter in. And the mother's prayers were answered that night.

They bowed the knee, and he received the Lord Jesus as his Savior. God is pretty determined, you know, in the matter of the soul salvation. C.S. Lewis tells about receiving a letter from a young fellow.

And the fellow says, you know, my life was very smooth for a long time. And he says now, he said, I've run into some Christians, and they're witnessing to me. He said they say things to me that really unsettles me.

He said, what should I do? C.S. Lewis said, the Lord is speaking to you, and the Holy Spirit is working your life. He said, I think you're in his meshes, and I don't think you'll get away. I think that's very good.

I think you're in his meshes, and I don't think you'll get away. I really marvel at the divine ingenuity of God in the salvation of souls. Many of you know George Cutting.

His little booklet, Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment, was a tremendous help to me. And he was an itinerant evangelist. And one day he was walking down a street, a village street in England.

And he seemed to, he believed that the Spirit of God was telling him just to stand there and say, behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And he did, which was a foolish thing to do, wasn't it? I mean, there was nobody on the street. There was nobody listening.

And he stood there, and he said, behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And then the impression came to him, he thought, from the Lord, say it again. And he said, behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

I would have felt so foolish, wouldn't you? And he went on his work, and months later he came back to that village, and he was going door to door, and ringing the bell, and talking to people about the Lord. And he rang one bell, and a lady came to the door. He engaged her in conversation.

He said, are you a believer? And she said, oh yes, I'm a believer. He said, tell me how you got saved. She said, one day I was working in my house, and she said, I was under deep conviction of sin.

She said, I prayed, Lord, you've got to help me. And I heard a voice saying, behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And she said, Lord, if that's you, say it again.

And the voice came, behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And she was saved. I hope that God could do that.

But you know, the lesson I get from that is, sometimes as Christians, we're called upon to do and say things that seem foolish to the world, aren't we? And it's a wonderful thing to be so in touch with the Lord, that you can sense what he's saying to you, and be willing to do it. I'm not like that, I confess. I come from New England.

New Englanders don't do that. But I'm ashamed of myself for it. I'm really ashamed of myself for it.

God uses very unconventional ways. Years ago, there was a man in England named Thomas Bilney. And he was a little man.

They called him Little Bilney. He was little, but he knew God. He knew the Word of God, and he had spiritual discernment.

And he used to go to hear a preacher named Latimer. And Latimer was a real theologian, and he had a great mind, and delivered marvelous sermons. And yet Thomas Bilney listened.

He was just, quote, a layman, whatever that is, a layman. He listened, and he thought, boy, there's something lacking there. If I could just speak to Latimer, huh? And he was a little nobody, you know, Little Bilney, of no account, kind of prepossessing personality.

Nobody pays any attention to him. Anyway, he went and he said, Father Latimer, may I make my confession? And Father Latimer thought he was going to hear a confession of sin. Instead of that, Bilney confessed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He told Father Latimer, as he was called, This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. He witnessed. That was pretty good for a little nobody to witness to a big somebody, huh? And here's how Boram describes it.

Latimer is taken by storm. He's completely overwhelmed. Heat-taking dissatisfaction that Bilney has described.

He has experienced for years the same insatiable hunger, the same devouring thirst. To the astonishment of Bilney, Latimer rises and then kneels beside him. That's great, I love it.

The preacher getting down and kneeling beside one of his parishioners. Kneels beside him. The father confessor seeks guidance from his penitent.

Bilney draws from his pocket the sacred volume that has brought such comfort and rapture to his own soul. It falls open to the passage that Bilney has read to himself over and over again. This is a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

The light that never was seen on sea or shore illumines the soul of Hugh Latimer, and Bilney sees that the passionate desire of his heart has been granted him. And from that hour, Bilney and Latimer lived only that they might unfold to all kinds and conditions of men the unsearchable riches of Christ. Latimer was saved.

That's the same Bishop Latimer who laid down his life, who was burned to the stake for the Lord Jesus Christ. The same Bishop Latimer who said to Ridley, his fellow martyr, We shall this day light such a candle in England as shall never be extinguished. That's quite unconventional, isn't it? For somebody sitting down there to lead the preacher to Christ.

It's not the only time it happened. There was a man in Holland years ago, his name was Abraham Kuyper, and he was a well-trained theologian. And one day he got down from the pulpit and a woman accosted him from the audience.

And she said to him, Dr. Kuyper, that was a great sermon, but you need to be born again. Now that's what I call sledgehammer evangelism. She said that.

And what do you think happened? He was. God used that. God used that expression by an unknown woman to lead him to the Lord.

He got down and he confessed his sin and trusted Christ. He was religious, but he was lost. And he went on to become a great theologian and the prime minister of Holland.

Abraham Kuyper, just because a woman had the courage to go to him and say, Dr. Kuyper, that was a great sermon, but you need to be born again. That thrills my soul. I mentioned C.S. Lewis before.

I suppose some of you have read some of his writings. I don't agree with all his doctrine, just because I tell this story. But it still shows the working of God in a human life.

He was raised in the Anglican tradition, we would say. Episcopal church, we would say, in this country. But he turned to atheism when he was a teenager.

He was educated at Oxford University, and that was interrupted by military service in World War I. He was still a convinced atheist when he returned to Oxford to study philosophy and English literature. When he was 24, his anti-God attitude began to suffer some severe setbacks. His closest friend was a fellow named Neville Coghill.

And Lewis said of him that he was the most intelligent and knowledgeable student in his class, and a most outstanding character. But Lewis was terribly disappointed that he had this one flaw. He was a Christian.

It was a terrible disappointment to him. And this happened with several other friends that he made. The people that seemed to appeal to him the most all had this sad imperfection.

They were Christians. And as if that wasn't enough, the writers whom he most admired, he admired the writings of George MacDonald. If only he didn't have to be a Christian.

It was a pity. Lewis looked on Gilbert Chesterton as the most sensible man alive, but he had embraced Christianity. And many others had that same drawback.

They were Christians. But God, his adversary, was working in his life. And as he described it later, he said, The great fisherman was playing his fish.

And I didn't realize that the hook was in my jaw. That's a good way to describe it. I know what that means from personal experience.

The great fisherman was playing his fish. And I little realized that the hook was in my jaw. Then he read Chesterton's Everlasting Mind, and he came to admit that Christianity made sense apart from its Christianity.

You say, what kind of logic is that? Well, there's no logic at all. But that's the way he said it. He said, well, Christianity makes sense apart from its Christianity.

It was a curious contradiction. And in 1926, the most hard-boiled of his atheist friends admitted the possibility that the Gospels were historical. That was a terrible blow to him.

When an atheist friend admitted the possibility that the Gospel records were historical, this atheist confessed that the story about the dying God must have actually happened once, and Louis was shattered as the hand of God began to close in on him. And it was during this time that he began to experience deep conviction of sin. I like the way he describes it.

I like his writing anyway. He said, I found what appalled me. A zoo of lust, a bedlam of ambitions, a nursery of fears, a harem of fondled hatreds.

My name was Legion. This is the spirit of God working, convicting him of his deep need as a sinner. And in 1929, alone in his room at Magdalene College, he said he felt the steady, unrelenting approach of him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet.

Still that fighting against God. I felt the steady, unrelenting approach of him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet. And there he knelt and prayed and acknowledged that God is God.

He said, the most reluctant convert in all of England. Looking back on his experience, he marveled at the divine humility which will accept a convert on such terms. That's good, isn't it? The divine humility that will accept a man on those terms.

You and I wouldn't do it. He said, who can duly adore that love which will open the high gates to a prodigal who is brought in kicking, struggling, resentful, and darting his eyes in every direction for a chance to escape? What a description. In other words, who can sufficiently adore the love of God that will bring in a prodigal who's looking in every direction for a chance to get away? And then he moved on to the great doctrines of the Christian faith.

One day he set out on a trip, still denying that Jesus was the Son of God, and when he arrived at his destination he believed. He found the joy that he had been seeking but couldn't find in atheism. And his conversion is an illustration of what Spurgeon said.

I'm always quoting Spurgeon. He said, the history of the Church of God is studded with the remarkable conversions of persons who did not wish to be converted, who were not looking for grace, but were even

opposed to it, and yet by the interposing arm of eternal mercy were struck down and transformed into earnest and devoted followers of the Lamb. Wonderful.

Talking about Spurgeon, he tells a story about some English soldiers who were on guard duty in Gibraltar. You know, inside the rock there were all kinds of corridors and rooms and everything else carved out, and it was a fortress, really, the Rock of Gibraltar. And one night there was, here's a Christian guard on duty here, and here's a long corridor, and here's an unsaved man here, and he's going through conviction of sin.

And out of the darkness, an officer appears to this man, and he's to give the password. Well, this dear Christian had been meditating about the Lord Jesus, and he says, the precious blood of Christ. And that wasn't the password, of course.

You know, and then he regained his composure and he gave the proper password. This man down here, under a great load of sin, hears those words, the precious blood of Christ, and he's converted to God. That's all he needed.

That was just the word he needed. He was struggling to know something that would relieve him from the terrible burden of sin that he was struggling under. The answer came, look, the precious blood of Christ.

I think that's wonderful. Who but God could ever work it out? Really, really tremendous. Let me just give you one more illustration.

W.P. McKay was a Scottish lad brought up in a godly Scottish home. And once again, when he left home, I guess it was traditional, the mother gave him a Bible and wrote his name in the Bible and wrote her name in the Bible. And he went on his way and he began to live a very dissolute, sinful, shameful life.

He became a drunkard, as a matter of fact. He became addicted to alcohol. But he studied medicine.

He became very successful in medicine. He became the head of the hospital in Edinburgh. And he was a bright, rising star.

But his mother was still praying for him. And one day they brought a man into the hospital who was badly mangled. And McKay was on duty at the time and he saw this man.

And the man said to him, how long do I have to live? And he said, don't worry, we'll get you out of here in no time. He said, I know. He said, I'm a Christian.

He said, I'm ready to go to meet the Lord. He said, how long do I have to live? He said, two or three hours. And then Dr. McKay went on his duties.

And after three hours he came back and he said to the nurse, oh, the man said to him, would you please have somebody take the money from my pocket to pay my rent and bring me the book. And so Dr. McKay arranged for that to happen. Take money to the landlady and bring the book.

After three hours, Dr. McKay came back and he said to the nurse, what about the man that was brought in so horribly mangled? And she said, he died. And he said, what was that all about, the book? And she said, it's under his pillow. Then he went and he reached under the pillow and brought out a Bible.

And he looked at the flyleaf of the Bible, his mother's name, his name in the Bible. He ran back to his office and fell down on his knees and trusted the sinner's Savior. And became an eminent servant of the Lord, wrote the book Grace and Truth.

And if you'll check carefully in your hymn book, you'll find hymns by W.P. McKay, the Bible that would not die. Everybody should be able to look back to an experience in his life or her life when by a definite act of faith he received the Lord Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. Repenting of sins and just trusting Christ as his only way to heaven.

Shall we pray? Father, we marvel at your wonderful grace. How you're more interested in our salvation than we are ourselves. And how by the Holy Spirit of God you seek us.

How you sent your lovely Son down to this world to seek and to save that which was lost. We thank you for everybody in the room today who has actually trusted Christ. He can look back to a time in his life and say, this is when it happened and this is where it happened.

We pray for any who might be with us today who are still strangers to you and may be putting up a very brave fight too. Lord, we pray that they might realize that the hook is in their jaw and that they won't get away. We ask it in the Savior's name and for his sake.

Amen. I believe Daryl has the closing hymn.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12783.mp3>

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