

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

There was a doctor talking on television about the problems we have with getting a good sleep at night. And because we were worn out and desperate for good sleep, many were reaching for the old sleeping pills. The experts were saying that too many of us took sleeping pills with very little thought or very little consideration. And it was interesting to hear the way he put it. He said that it was all right taking a sleeping pill for perhaps a few nights, up to maybe two weeks but once it got over two weeks, you ought to go to the doctor and find out why you are experiencing insomnia, otherwise you could be doing real damage to yourself, but he did put it that way. It's all right -- maybe you lose a job or maybe you experience the death of a loved one and so you take a sleeping pill so that you can get to sleep. And it was interesting to hear again the way the ordinary person, who doesn't know about God at all, tackles things.

Maybe some of us here tonight tackle it that way. But do you see that is not a faith way? That is really a way of knowledge of good and evil. That is, "Okay, I can't get to sleep so I'll take a sleeping pill, now I'll get to sleep and that'll get me to work next day and I'll get through the day. And then if I can't get to sleep tomorrow night, I'll take another sleeping pill and I'll get to sleep and I'll get through the day." That kind of attitude, "I'll manage this some way or other by using men's methods, I'll get through my life" that's eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And really, when a loved one dies God expects us to have released that loved one to him and to relax and to trust him with that dear one. It's the same when we lose a job -- God expects us not to continue to be all filled with knots in our tummies and with worry and strain in our hearts and our minds, he expects us to deal with the obvious trauma that you feel immediately when you lose the job. Then he expects us to come around; to commit our way unto the Lord and to trust in him, knowing that he will act, and then to go to bed and to sleep deeply and well. In other words, the Father expects us to live by faith in him, not by faith in our own ways of overcoming our difficulties. And so that's why we're studying the Old Testament, first of all, these Sunday evenings, and trying to cover it chapter by chapter; in order to see how faithful and how dependable God is for you and for me so that we'll begin to relax into a life of faith. And loved ones, that's the way the Father intends us to live. So if you use sleeping pills that way, don't get all uptight and say, "Oh, I'm sinning, I'm sinning" that isn't the issue. The issue is that that's eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It's using men's strategies and men's ways of overcoming some malfunction in our personalities instead of going to the Father and finding out why this malfunction is taking place and beginning to relax and rest in him.

Maybe it would help some of you to nail it down even more in your own lives if I tell you of a loved one that came up here this morning. I won't outline to you the particular medical and personal problem that she was facing, but she suddenly realized that her attitude up to now had been, "Let's get the battery of tests. Let's get the doctors at it. Let's get everybody at it and let's somehow overcome this thing." And the error was not in using the doctors. The error was not, even, in having tests. But the error was in assuming that God can't do much about this so I'd better take the best that man can offer me and somehow get this thing sorted out. And loved ones, that's an attitude of non-faith, you see.

And so many of us, I think, juxtapose faith and action -- isn't that right -- we kind of say, "Ah, then you don't expect me to act at all?" Yes! Yes! They had to walk around the walls of Jericho. They have to touch the leper. They have to do all kinds of things, but it was action as directed by the Father and by their trust and confidence in him. It was not action that resulted from the attitude, "This isn't anything God can do anything about. It's up to me to sort this one out myself." So that's the life of faith and the life of the knowledge of good and evil. And that, you remember, is what we saw in Genesis 1-- how God made the earth and the heavens and then he gave us men and women the responsibility to be fruitful and to multiply and to fill the earth and subdue it. That was our task. We were to bring the whole earth into order under his will.

Then in Genesis 2 we found out how we were to do that; we were to do that by eating of the tree of life. And as far as we can see it is by trusting him, by putting our faith in him and by believing that he would give us the life and the energy and the initial direction to bring the world into subjection to his will.

And then in Genesis 3, we saw the great fall, as it's called: the rebellion of us human beings against our God, not, strange enough, saying, "We're not going to be fruitful! We're not going to multiply! We're not going to subdue the world! We're not! We're not!" That wasn't their fall that wasn't their rebellion. The fall and rebellion was, "Sure, we'll multiply and we'll fill the earth and we'll subdue it, but not by your life and by faith in you, but by our own ability to work out what is a good way to do this and what is an evil way to do this; by our own knowledge of good and evil, by our own manipulating the facts of this world, by our own trial and error, which is really the scientific method; if you remember, the scientific method is really experiment -- trial and error -- by our own manipulation of the factors in this world we'll bring it into subjection." And that was the rebellion. So it's maybe good to remember that we ourselves are trying to do what God wants us to do. That's not the fall; the fall is doing what God wants us to do by our own knowledge of what is good and evil, and by our deciding what is the good way to do that and what is the evil way to do it, rather than in resting upon him.

The result is, of course, we immediately get preoccupied with ourselves. We forget, actually, the original commission and I think that's true of most of us. I wonder how many of us in our jobs, are thinking, "Oh, Lord how can my job bring the world into order? How is my job bringing your world into submission to your will? Indeed, Lord, that's the very reason I'm doing my job -- because I believe you have put me here with these abilities so that I can bring the world into subjection to your will." Most of us aren't saying that.

Most of us are saying "When we saw that the tree was good for food and it was a delight for the eyes, and that it was to be desired to make you wise, we ate of it." In other words isn't it true that most of us, and certainly most of the world, looks upon jobs or work not as a way of bringing the world into subjection to God, but as a way of getting food for themselves, getting some delight to the eye, some happiness for themselves and making themselves appear wise, getting some sense of importance and significance for themselves. And so the rebellion is trying to do what God wants us to do by our own knowledge of good and evil and therefore ending up preoccupied with what we can get from the world rather than bringing it into subjection to his will. That's the fall, loved ones, and you remember that last Sunday we talked about man's guilty response to God when he took that action.

Now one of the difficulties I'd point out with God's own position, once we did that, was we would

probably bring the world into some kind of order. We probably would. Knowledge of good and evil is something he has planted in the world and the fact is that we have enough of his image in us that we would probably bring it into some kind of order and so we do manage through irrigation skills to make the desert blossom as a rose. We do, by cutting this part of the body and that part of the body, originally by bleeding, you remember, and really medicine today is just a slight advance on that -- we cut out the bad part and hope that the good part will blossom. But we are able by our own methods, to bring some kind of order to the world. Even if you look at the most hideous example of it in the communist state; they do bring some kind of order into the world. Even if you look at China, at least the billion people have more food than they had before. And so you're able to bring some appearance of order to the world and so God's whole task was in the midst of the degree of the success that we would have, to point out to us, "You're not doing it right. You're not doing it right. This wasn't the way I meant you do to it." And that was one of God's great tasks -- to build in enough signs that we weren't doing it the way he intended, that we didn't trust him, that we weren't living in faith in him, that he could expose Satan's deception.

Because you remember at the beginning, it was deception. The woman said, "Oh, the serpent deceived me and I ate and then I gave to my husband." So God's great task was to build enough signs into the fallen world that we would realize that there is something that isn't right here. And that's why, loved ones, I thought it would be reasonable this evening to talk about God's saving penalties because that's really what they were. And towards the end of the chapter, God's saving precautions. I think the Father can show us some things about our own life of faith as we study this.

So maybe you'd turn to Genesis, Chapter 3 verse 14 -- the saving penalties go right down to verse 19 and then the saving precautions go from 20 to the end of the chapter, to [verse] 24. Loved ones, the first thing that God did in verse 14 was "The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.'" God built into the life of the serpent and into the animal world a fall and a descent that was not in his original plan for them.

So when you read about nature you read about the animal world that had shared the fall that we men and women experienced before God. The fact was that God put the world under our care and when we rebelled against God and we fell out of his fellowship, what was under our care fell out of his fellowship too, and he allowed a whole spiritual disintegration and dislocation to take place in the animal world and that's why we often see so much cruelty in the world of the animals. Really the will of the God is for the lamb and the lion to lie down together that was God's plan originally but when we rejected his will and rejected faith in him, the strain that began to operate in us spread to the animal world itself.

You can see how it works even here in our own world. I remember the last little dog we had, a little Yorkshire; he knew when we were at peace with each other and when we were strained. He knew almost before we did and it would be funny, but to this old Irish joking that goes on, he could tell when it was a good joke and when it wasn't a good joke; when it was just a funny joke and when it was a joke with a little bit of a prod in it. It's amazing how the animals have an instinct that connects them in some deep, deep way with the way you and I operate and live. So even in that example you can see how we are connected with the animal world. Many great lion tamers would say, "Of course -- an animal knows when you're at peace; it knows when you're a master over it and it knows when you're not." So we can see physic or psychological ways how we can connect up with the animal world, but the truth is loved ones, there was a deep spiritual dislocation that took place in the animal world at that time.

And the reason of course it took place was, God wanted us to see that things are not the way they were meant to be: things are not perfect, things are not right. There is cruelty and savagery in the world of the animals. So that was one of the saving penalties that continue to remind us today that things are not right. Then you see in verse 15, "I will put enmity between you and the woman."

Here God was speaking to the serpent, as he stood for Satan, because it was Satan that took hold of the serpent and whispered to Eve. [God said] I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed." In other words, Satan, you are going to have seed in this world and she will have seed. And eventually her seed, who will be born of the house of David and eventually of Mary and Joseph; her seed, a human being, a man born of human parents, shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. And so it's interesting – "you, Satan yourself, will bruise his heel but it will be her seed that will bruise your head."

And obviously what God is promising even at that stage when he's imposing a penalty upon mankind he's saying "But there's going to be a deliverance from this; right now, in the middle of the rebellion and fall, I've already planned deliverance. I've planned that you, Eve, will have a son that will have a daughter that will eventually have a little one that will be born in Bethlehem and that little one will grow into a man that will be able to stand against Satan and take back what Satan has deceived you into giving up." And so even in that penalty there was the promise that Satan would be destroyed.

Loved ones, we need to see that right back then God had condemned Satan to death. So all of us need to see that Satan does not have power – really! God through Jesus put Satan under his feet. He destroyed Satan and Satan only has deceiving and lying ability.

So often you will see what looks like his power, but it's really him deceiving others into manipulating powers that are of God. Every time you see lust it is really the power to propagate the race that is being exercised by man in his way without God's control. Every time you see gluttony you see the legitimate desire for food being exercised beyond what God planned and by man's own desire and by man's own plans. But it's always Satan's manipulating powers that God alone has placed in the world. It's good to see that -- God can always prevent his powers from being used against you. He can always give you light and life to see that his powers cannot be used against you -- there is no power that Satan has. His only ability is to deceive and to lie and to bluff and to manipulate or pervert the power that God has placed in you. So there is a sense in which it's good to be afraid of Satan in the sense that you watch out for him, but it's bad to be afraid of him in a sense because once you know, "Ah, that's Satan" one little word will fell him because, in fact, God has destroyed him in Jesus.

And so actually you fail to believe the victory of Jesus over Satan when you think you have to struggle with him. "I have to struggle! How will I overcome this?" So you face a certain attitude of your boss at work or you face a certain attitude of someone in the house or in the family and you think, "Oh, how am I going to destroy that? It's such a mighty power." No – it only appears to be a mighty power, but Satan has already been destroyed by Jesus and all you have to do is believe that and say, "Satan, get thee behind me." And that's, you remember, what the Bible says, if you just repel him, he will flee from you. That's all you have to do, just resist him. Just resist him and he'll flee from you. A lot of us see satanic situations and satanic atmospheres in the office or at work or in somebody else's life and we think, "How are we ever going to overcome it?" Just resist it. That's all. Just resist it and it will flee from you. And that's God promise because God right back there settled Satan's destiny; it was settled at Calvary in Jesus.

Then you see in Verse 16, "To the woman he said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing.'" So presumably you mums were to bear children originally without any pain at all, and presumably the world was to be without pain, but God said "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children," and presumably that was to continually bring before us that all was not as God had planned it. That's it; God was trying to build in enough signs that we would know that this isn't the way it was meant to be. And I think some of you ladies have had experience of natural childbirth and you've had experience of how when you're relaxed in the Father and you're resting in him, a great deal of the pain can be avoided. And it seems that as we come into a place of deeper and deeper peace in Jesus, then these saving penalties can be turned around and we can be freed from them. "Yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." And of course, that was the original penalty.

You remember how it was transformed by Jesus' victory on Calvary. It's no longer "yet your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you" but in Ephesians 5:21, "be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." It's a mutual subjection and a mutual submission and a mutual cooperation. It's no longer just the woman desiring the husband, but the woman again uniting with the husband and fulfilling the commission that God has given.

Then in Genesis 3 verse 17, "And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and eaten of the tree which I had commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you.'" And that's why earthquakes began to take place. Some of us say, "Why did earthquakes take place? Why did natural disasters take place? Surely the only explanation for the fall of the natural world is that Satan fell and it was that fall of Satan who was originally in charge of the world." No; God says clearly "cursed is the ground because of you." So a great dislocation and strain and agony was brought into the world itself. It wasn't the original plan of the Father that there would be floods and earthquakes and destructive storms -- that was something that God brought in so that we would see, "Wait a minute -- things aren't right here; we're not doing it right. We're being deceived ; we're living here by our own knowledge of good and evil and not by trust in God." And so "cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you." Presumably there were no thorns and thistles in the original plan. There were no things that did harm or did damage, so there is now that subtle balance of nature where certain scavengers are needed to keep the natural world in balance. Before the fall that wasn't needed; the natural world would be in balance itself -- in peace and freedom from strain. But it was then that God brought in all the kinds of scavengers that balanced the whole thing together. So it works and is permitted by God, but it is not his original plan.

"And you shall eat the plants of the field." Remember that ties up, loved ones, with that verse in Romans 8:20 where you read that God arranged this so that we would realize there was a deliverance possible from it, "for the creature was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now" and we do know that. Every time you read of the mudslides in California, every time you read of the forest fires, every time you read of the hideous earthquakes that destroy millions of people you see, yes, the whole creation is subject to futility and it is groaning and there is something that is rotten in this whole setup that was not God's original plan when he said, "Behold, it is very good." You can see the importance of seeing this and how this deals with a lot of the problems that we talk about when we discuss the problem of evil or the problem of suffering. Sure, all these things have come into the world since man rebelled

against God and the world itself began to share the strain and dislocation of life that its original lord, mankind, experienced.

Then in verse 19, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread" and that is a saving penalty – "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread." I don't know what you think of work, but I think a lot of us think, "Ah, yeah, work -- it's a punishment for our rebellion against God." But you can see in all of these saving penalties that there is something saving in them, so many of us who are naturally lazy and self-indulgent have, by work and by the necessity of work, been pulled out of ourselves. And who of us would question that it has been the need to get up in the morning and get out to work to earn our money that has delivered many of us from crippling indolence in our lives and laziness? Many of us probably would testify to the fact that the sheer demand of work each day has drawn us out of ourselves and has done a great deal to make us what we are today. So work itself and the regularity of work and the commitment to work is part of God's saving penalty and its part of what he uses to deliver us and save us.

It isn't terribly important, in a way, the work which we do, as you look at Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3:10. It's why many of us are silly -- it's understandable because our world puts such emphasis on what you do; do I teach or am I a doctor or do I clean floors? Our world is always after significance and security so it makes a big thing out of those. God's word doesn't; Ecclesiastes 3:10-15 "I have seen the business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time; also he has put eternity into man's mind, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; also that it is God's gift to man that every one should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil. I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, or anything can be taken from it; God has made it so, in order that men should fear before him. That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already has been; and God seeks what has been driven away."

So many of us have worked our way through, "Oh I want to be a train driver or I want to be a fireman," and so many of us have worked even through our more serious ambitions and begin to see that it doesn't matter too much what you do. What matters is that you enjoy it and you do it with all your heart; if you're laying bricks that you're doing it with all your heart, and if you're brushing floors, that you're doing it with all your heart.

It really isn't very important what you do; that's part of mankind's fall that emphasizes that it's vital. It's vital that you're a politician! It's vital that you're a doctor! It's vital that you're a scientist! It isn't. What's vital is "I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live." Also that it's God's gift to man that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil. I would imagine those who are older than me and certainly those who are as old as me, would echo that: enjoy what you're doing. Enjoy it. I don't think I have any regrets, but if I think I was stupid in any way, I think I was stupid if I ever spent one half hour wondering would I be a teacher or a minister or would I be a garbage collector or would I be a custodian or would I be a builder. Wasting one minute wondering about that is wasting too much time. So don't get caught up over "What am I doing? What am I doing?"

Be happy in what God has given you to do -- that's it. There's no great difference between being this and being that; it's enjoying what the Father has given you. There can be, too, loved ones, a real lack of faith and real rebellion against God in our preoccupation with what we're doing. There

can be a discontentment and an unwillingness to be responsible in what he has given you. After all, he works all things according to the council of his will so doesn't he know what you're doing at present? Well, wouldn't he change it if he wasn't happy? Wouldn't he? Hasn't he the power to do that? Hasn't he the power to bring a job up tomorrow that he would prefer you to be in? Well if he hasn't done that, then what you're in at the moment is God's will for you. Now why not relax and enjoy that and thank him. Really why [you complain] is because there's a little worm inside your head that keeps saying, "Yeah, but I like to do this." Well, that's beside the point -- it doesn't matter what you like to do; God knows you better than you know yourself and he knows exactly what you need to be doing and what you need to be doing is what you're doing today, at this moment. There is nothing, loved ones that brings such joy and such delight in your life as giving up the business of being your own employment counselor. Really! There's nothing that gives you so much joy as realizing, "Wait a minute -- I'm not an employment counselor so let me not counsel myself about further employment. I'm this or I'm that, so let me do it with all my heart." And that's how work is part of God's saving penalty to us. In verse 19 "In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread until you return to the ground. For out of it you are taken, you are dust and to dust you shall return."

J.B. Phillips, C.S. Lewis, they all think the same: that probably God's will was for us to live forever so that there would be no death. There wouldn't be sleeping which is all death is. Remember -- none of us will die, not even those who reject God will die. They will live on and on forever, burning in their own selfishness. But all of us will live forever; we are made eternal beings and we will live forever, but God allowed death to come in to show us there is an interruption of what is perfect and good in this world. So death probably came in as a saving penalty that God imposed on us.

And then the ones, if you would look for a few minutes at God's saving precautions, because he had to make some. Verse 20: "The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." Eve is the Hebrew word for life, for living and it shows that right in the midst of the fall; God was beginning to enable life to go on. He was making plans for the human race would continue to propagate. And so that was a precaution: he allowed man to continue to propagate even though it was the woman in pain, and then in verse 21, "And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife garments of skins, and clothed them." It's interesting that in order to produce the skins of course you had to kill, and that's the first mention of killing in the Bible. Those animals that were killed, that was the first blood that was shed and was really a sign of the blood that would have to be shed for all of this to be redeemed through Jesus. And so, in a way, that's the first sacrifice that God had to make in connection with his own creation and the connection with his own son, when he provided the skins.

But maybe equally important is that God made all kinds of concessions to us. We weren't really meant to wear clothes. We didn't really need to wear clothes if we trusted him and we trusted each other. But that is a sign of many of the concessions that God has made. There are all kinds of things in our world that God has allowed. Take watches -- I don't think we're really meant to wear watches! There wasn't really meant to be time and schedules but God, in order to enable us in our fallen state to exist in this finite world, allowed all kinds of things to happen that would make it possible for us to exist in this world, to live in it. And so really, presumably, we were able to fly or we were able to move through space at tremendous speed. Presumably the old time machine theory is true -- we were able to move from century to century -- presumably there were no centuries; it was one great eternal moment. But God allowed all kinds of concessions like that to be built into our life even as he gave us clothes to cover us to enable us to exist in this new

state of self-consciousness and even in a state of distrust. This is amazing how good God has been to us and it is incredible when you think that he continues to give us a new life that we might curse him. It's an amazing will of God that he continues to give us life that we might use his son's name in vain. That is great love and it continues to support us and sustain us even as we use that life he gives us to destroy his own creation. And yet God has great forbearance towards us; he gives Israel a King even though he thinks a King is not best for them. And he often gives you and me things that are not best for us, but he allows them to come to us because they enable us to live a little longer so that we have a chance of coming back to him.

And loves ones, if you look at verse 22, "Then the Lord God said, "Behold the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil." In other words, he no longer trusts us, he know longer submits to me, "and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and He can live forever. In other words, if I let him now receive the spirit of eternal life, and eat, he will live forever" and of course, destroy the universe. He will be able to exist anywhere in the universe because life forever is also omnipresence; it's a triumph over time and space and it's an ability to go through the universe and to spread this selfishness. So God said, "lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever -- therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life." God withdrew the opportunity to be filled with his Holy Spirit; the tree of life is the Holy Spirit, in order to prevent the spread of our evil and our selfishness throughout the universe, and therefore, causing him to throw the whole thing over and destroy everything, he prevented us getting the Holy Spirit and he only gives the Holy Spirit actually, in Acts 5:32 as you remember "to those who obey him." So it's only when we come back into a place where we say, "Father, we're happy to be what you want us to be" that we begin to sense the gentle current of the Holy Spirit begin to fill us with rest and peace and trust.

You probably have experienced that yourself at tragic moments in your life; you often come back again to a deep submission to God so you try to make this friendship work that will lead to marriage; the thing falls apart and at that moment, late on at night, you relax in the Father's arms and for that moment, you submit to him. And it's interesting, isn't it; you sense the Spirit of peace and quiet -- the Holy Spirit, coming back into your life. Then you get up the next morning and begin to get uppity again and make new plans to bring about another marriage or to bring about another job or to bring about more money or to bring about what you want in life. And every time you back away from that and begin to trust the Father, there comes that sweet Spirit -- peace and joy in the Holy Spirit -- back into your life. So it is that God has a flaming sword that cuts you off from the Holy Spirit every time you are living for yourself and that flaming sword is cast away every time you sink into God's arms.

Any questions, loved ones since that's the first three chapters. I had hoped to do that about two weeks ago. It's necessary to spend, I think, more time because it is so complex, the understanding of the fall, or our understanding of it is so poor.

Question from the audience:

Clyde was asking is there is any significance in the two clauses, he, Jesus shall bruise your head Satan and you shall bruise his heel.

Answer:

It seems, Clyde that the commentators say you're right; not only is it to please the Lord to bruise him -- you remember in Isaiah 53, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him", but the significant thing is that Jesus will bruise Satan's head. Satan will simply bruise Jesus' heel and he will wound Jesus, but not unto death, so Jesus rose from the dead in triumph. But if you like to look at the footnote for Revelation 12:9 you see that it was a bruising of Satan's head that took place there, not simply bruising of his heel. "And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world -- he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." And then you remember there was further mention in Revelation in 20:2, "and he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed over him, that he should deceive nations no more till the thousand years were ended." And a thousand years would end, and then finally he was cast into the lake of fire forever. So it seems that that's part of the meaning of time.

Question from the audience: inaudible.

Answer: I don't know the Hebrew word for bruised so I can't help there.  
Any other questions?

So getting back to the sleeping pills, we should ask the Holy Spirit "Holy Spirit is there any way in which Satan is deceiving me? Is there any way in which the strain in my life or the pain in it is caused by my not trusting the Father for everything? Will you show me that?" Loved ones, the truth is that probably in a thousand ways, we're using our own clever knowledge to bring things about. That perfect peace and rest comes from a relaxing in your Father and believing that he has put you here, he has your life organized, he has it all planned. His Holy Spirit is specifically sent to reveal that to you so you don't need to fret and you don't need to worry and you don't need to be anxious.

You need to relax in the Father's arms to say, "Father, thank you. Thank you that I have my job that I have at present. Thank you that I can do it with joy, day by day. And thank you that I can relax in you and begin to follow your guidance for my life." And you see loved ones, that doesn't result in passivity; that results in a life of great activity, but an activity that stems from peace. Remember there's the last line of that poem by Rubert Brooke that "If I should die, think only this of me; that there's some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England." It was written by a young pilot during the first World War. And then he says at the very end of life he will be absorbed into the eternal; "in hearts at peace under an English heaven." And hearts at peace -- that's the way we're meant to live; full of gentleness and hearts at peace. Let's just ask the dear spirit of Jesus to reveal to us if there's any way in which our hearts are not at peace. Let us pray.

Dear Holy Spirit, we know that the Kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. So will you kindly make us aware of why our hearts may not be at peace? Dear Holy Spirit, you know that strain and striving seems to be the very air we breathe. The whole world seems to be full of it. We've even been brought up to cherish those virtues. Dear Holy Spirit will you reveal to us if there's any way in which we're not resting in the Father's arms, nestling into his heart, hearing the beat of his heart, and putting our ears close to his lips to hear what he wants us to do. Dear Lord, as you pass beside us now, each one of us, will you free us? Will you release us? And as we are relaxing, letting the frowns go from our foreheads and the worries and the anxieties and the fretting go from our hearts when you enable us to be content and to lie in our Father's arms and

begin to do what he wanted us to do.

Dear Father, show us what you want us to do. Father, we don't ask it now because so often if you give us the knowledge then we start going after that so we don't even ask you to show us. We say to you Father, we trust you that you will show us the next step, and one step is enough for us. So we thank you. Thank you now. Thank you as we relax into you and commit our way unto the Lord and trust in him we know that you will act. Thank you, Lord. Thank you. We commit ourselves to you now for a good deep, sleep tonight, and peace and rest in the brightness and joy of your presence in the world.

Now the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us, now and throughout this coming week. Amen.