

Carnality

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Okay, let's pray. Lord Jesus we thank you for what you have done on Calvary: changed the whole thing around and made it possible for us to live, as you lived, in victory over the world and over circumstances, and to live in joy in your Father. And we thank you that that is our will for us this night, and by your Holy Spirit we would trust you to give each one of us a revelation as to new ways in which we can enter into you and live above the world yet in it for your glory. Amen.

Loved ones, if you would be patient with me I'd just mention to you again, for the sake especially of those who might be new this evening, that we're talking in these Sunday evenings about the spiritual life. And by the spiritual life we mean a life that is lived guided by God's Spirit within. And we have in this quarter, this past quarter, been talking particularly of the spirit. And for those of you who have not seen our miserable diagrams, one way of looking at the personality is that way, to see it as really three levels of activity. [Draws diagram of 3 concentric rectangles, and labels innermost 'Spirit', the next level out is 'Soul', and the outer level is 'body'. Then under that he writes 'world', and above it is the 'Holy Spirit'.] The body outwardly, and the soul next, and then the spirit, and God intends us of course, to live out that way really, all the time, by dint of his Holy Spirit coming into us. [On the diagram he shows movement from the Holy Spirit into our spirit, out to the soul, out from the soul to the body and from the body to the world.]

And of course, what we've often shared is that in fact we, as people, don't live that way but we live the other way. [He shows diagram again, and shows arrows coming in from the world to the body and in to the soul and in to the spirit.] We live in that way and we try to get from really, people, and circumstances, and things the love, and the security, and the happiness -- and as somebody said, you remember, at communion, "The other one whatever it is," but 'security', 'happiness' --and I had almost forgotten too -- 'significance' that really God intended us to get from himself. And so most of us live 'sponge like' lives. We're soaking in from other people.

Now, what happens when we're born of God's spirit is we see that we're meant to live by the power of God's Spirit and we receive his Spirit into us. That's what we call receiving Jesus. We give our lives to God and we receive Jesus' Spirit into us. And of course his Spirit is faithful and begins to work out and try to get out. [On diagram he shows arrows from God and the Holy Spirit above down into our spirits and from there to the soul and from there to the body and out to the world.] And that's where you feel urgings to love other people, you know, or to help other people, or to draw other people to God, or you feel a desire to read the Bible, or to pray. That's the beginning of Jesus' Spirit moving in you.

The tragedy is, for so many of us, we find that that just gets to about that level [On the diagram he shows the life from the Holy Spirit stops at the soul.] And then it hits this massive inward life which we call a carnal life. And that carnal life is depending still on those things. [He shows 'security', 'significance' and 'happiness'.] And this life of Jesus is trying to give us those things from within, but he cannot because we're still depending on people outside. And of course, there's no move forward until that [He indicates the life that is depending on the world.] is crucified, until we finally stop that kind of inward moving life. And you remember, we looked at it

in the line of that diagram and we suggested that really God intended us to live like that. [On diagram he adds overlay that shows arrows from God and the Holy Spirit above down into our spirits and from there to the soul and from there to the body and out to the world.] But in fact, we have started to live that way, [He shows direction in from the world] trying to get security, significance, and happiness from the world and from other people.

Now loved ones, that's called carnality. And the fullness of the Holy Spirit comes to cleanse that from us. And I sense from what a number of you have said to me, that that really is where a lot of us are living. We're living in carnality; we're living in the midst of carnality. And we're living -- maybe we are having some trouble with souliness, and that kind of thing, but most of all we're having trouble with carnality. And could I point out to you that carnality is when you are worried because somebody has criticized you. That's carnality, you see.

So don't pretend that you haven't got that. That's silly stuff. The thing is, admit that you have that and see that there is an answer to it. So I would put it to you this evening, do you get all paranoid when somebody talks about you or criticizes you? Would you say that you do care about what people think of you? Would you say that? Well, may I share with you that Jesus didn't, you see. Jesus didn't; he was absolutely at peace. Even when they criticized him, even when the Pharisees talked like that behind their hands, even when the disciples themselves were beginning to wonder about certain things, Jesus was in absolute peace. And that was because he cared only about what God thought of him.

Now loved ones, he didn't come to that by osmosis. And that's what I want you to see. He comes to that in a certain instance in his life, a certain instant. It's an instantaneous moment. He might have been a long time coming to it, but he came to it. There was a time when he cared only for what his Father thought, and what his Father thought of him. And it's the same with us. You can come to it in a moment. Now, I think a lot of us think, "Oh no, that's something you work out of. You work out of what people think of you. Or, you get over that gradually." You don't. You experience that in a moment of time through being crucified with Christ. And the fact is that all of us have been crucified. And you can experience that in a moment, if you are at last are willing to face whatever people think of you, and to die to it.

And loved ones, that's what it means to be freed from carnality. That is why being freed from carnality is such a simple down-to-earth thing. I mean, you can do what I did. I just took those things. Frankly, I just looked at the sins in my life. And there was lust; and there was ambition, selfish ambition; and there was pride. And I just took those things, and I started to go down in my own heart and ask myself why had I selfish ambition. And I asked the Holy Spirit to begin to show me why I had selfish ambition in the center of my life. And I just kept on examining, and examining. Every time that miserable stuff came up, I just examined, and examined, and asked the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, show me, show me why."

And of course, you come to the superficial answers, "Oh well, you have selfish ambition because you want to succeed. You want to be successful. You want to be approved of by your friends. You want your mother and your father to think you've done well. You want people to think you're a success." And then the Holy Spirit took me on, and on, and showed me that that was really just a little point of the iceberg, that actually, even though on the outside I was a servant of God, deep down I was really a servant of myself. And deep down there was a huge 'self' there that wanted always its own way.

And loved ones, I know that you who have trouble with carnality, you that still lose your temper, or get angry, or get impatient, or get irritable, I know that's your problem. You think you're good. And you think you're nice. And you think you're a real servant of Jesus. But you're not, you know. You're only outwardly a servant of Jesus. Inwardly you're filled with self. And you want to have your own way. And what puts us off, I think, at times, is we think that the carnal heart wouldn't like to do any good. But it does.

The carnal heart loves religion. And it just loves to do things for other people, as long as it can keep itself upper most, as long as it can control things. And the chief mark of a carnal heart is that desire to control. And so many of us here, you see, will make all kinds of sacrifices. That's why Paul says, "If I give my body to be burned." There are many of us who will give our body to be burned. We will give away all our things. We'll do everything as long as in the final instance we can choose how far we go in that sacrifice.

But coming into crucifixion with Christ, and allowing your old self to be completely switched around, means coming to the place where you no longer set the limits on your sacrifice. You no longer say, "I will sacrifice thus far." But you say to Jesus, "Lord Jesus, I give up even my right to determine how far I will sacrifice, or how much I will endure from the insults of other people. And Lord, I accept whatever you accept."

And that's really what it is, loved ones. It's a complete identification with Jesus and the cross. It's saying, "Lord Jesus, whatever you're willing to suffer in my life, I'm willing to suffer." Now of course, you can see that when you come to that, there comes a great rest inside you. There comes a great peace. At last, your life and where it goes, and your future, is not your responsibility; it's his responsibility. It's as much as he wants you to bear that you bear. And you no longer have to guard and defend yourself against other people. And that's why there's such peace.

That's why that hymn was written by a man who was delivered from carnality. "There is a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God, a place where sin cannot molest." See, and that's what I think some of you don't realize, that it's a place where sin "cannot molest." And it's interesting that there's a piece of scripture that says, "You cannot commit sin." You cannot. You can come to a place where the stuff does not rise within you, where there is rest, total rest with God's will for you.

Now, may I ask you tonight, would you like to die tonight? See, would you like to die? Now, I'm not talking metaphorically. No. I'm not talking about "die by faith." I mean, would you like to die tonight and go to heaven?

Well it is interesting, isn't it? I mean, we've various kinds of responses to that, because we know we're supposed to say, "Yeah, yeah I would. I'd rather -- to be with Christ is far better but I'll stay around for the sake of all you people." And we kind of know that we should say that. And we feel, "Yeah, yeah, I would; I would." But you see, that's a good guide, because the next question is obvious. "Why would you not like to die? Just what would keep you here? What would keep you here tonight? Why would you not like to die?" And then it's good to see when it's simple things like, "Well, there's a parcel under the Christmas tree that I'd like to open before I go." Well then it's good to say, "Oh yes! You get a little kick out of that parcel, do you?" Or, "Well, I'd like to have a good marriage first. Then I'd be willing to die." Well, it's good to ask yourself, "What are you after in that? What would you like out of the marriage?" or, "What are you hoping out of your future?" Because in a way, being ready to die with Christ is exactly the issue that you

face when you ask yourself, "Would you like to die tonight?" Do you really feel, "Yeah, boy, I'd rather be with Jesus tonight than any other thing, far rather?"

Now, if you wouldn't, then why wouldn't you? And honestly, whatever your answer to that is probably a little clue as to where Satan has his hooks in you. Really! Something that you would rather have tonight, rather than Jesus' company and his presence, that probably indicates where Satan has his hooks a little into you, and where self is still ruling in your life. And being 'free from carnality' is simply dealing with that. But, it is as down to earth as that.

Now, if you say to me, "Oh well, do you mean we have to die to enjoyment?" No, God gives you all kinds of enjoyment. But Jesus on the cross wanted to be nowhere but that place. That was his Father's will for him. And that was not enjoyable in our sense of the word. His body experienced pain. His emotions were strained. His mind was thinking of all the things around him and all the problem of eternity. And his spirit was bearing all the sinfulness of ourselves. And yet, that was the place he wanted to be more than any other place in the whole world. So he had died to having the kind of enjoyment that he chose to have whenever he wanted it. And that's what it means to die to happiness, you see.

It doesn't mean that you'll never get happiness. But it means dying to having the happiness that you want. And of course, you know that that, in a way, is what spoils you loving other people, isn't it? I mean, after a service like tonight we all know you have the whole tendency to go off and do what you enjoy doing, or go and speak to the people that you enjoy talking with; or there's somebody here tonight that you'd just like to get to know. So you think primarily, "What would I enjoy doing tonight? Would I enjoy going down to the restaurant and having a hot chocolate? Would I enjoy doing something else? Going to Brigdemans [ice cream stores in Minnesota] and having ice cream? Would I enjoy going home and watching television?" But do you see, there are a mass of things like that that automatically spring up in our little hearts? And we like to say we're not slaves to enjoyment. But actually, usually we never think of anything else but that. We normally just think, "What would I enjoy tonight?"

Now, dying with Jesus is dying to your right for the happiness, and enjoyment that you think you should have and that you ought to have. And of course, when you come to that place, there comes a great rest. Do you see that? It comes to the point, where after a service like this, there's a real peace in your heart, of course a real openness, a real openness. "Lord Jesus, what would you like me to do tonight?" And so you see somebody across the aisle, and you're open to Jesus' spirit prompting you to speak to them.

But until you die to your own happiness and your own enjoyment and what you ought to have tonight, you couldn't hear his voice. You couldn't hear it, however loud he spoke. You're not even thinking of that. But when you die to your right to happiness, suddenly you become available to the Lord. It's interesting, we all think, "O well, we are available to the Lord. Here I am! I'm here to serve God and to worship him, and I'm ready to do..." But at this moment are you really available to the Lord Jesus? Are you really free, and easy, and loose? Are you really in a position where, "Lord whatever you want me to do tonight."

Well loved ones, that's what being freed from carnality is. And it's the same with the whole security thing, you see. I mean, you should really look at it. It's good to be hard on yourself, because it gives you a clue. That's why I ran towards sin that I saw in my life, because I knew that's the symptom that will help me, with the Holy Spirit, to track down the disease, and to see

the particular 'slavery to self' that I have to die to on the cross. And so track it down. Do you worry? You know, I'd just ask you, "Do you worry?" And what kind of things do you worry about? And do you worry when the car gets dented? Or, do you worry when the finances are tight? Do you worry?

You know what worry is. It's thinking over the thing again, and again, unable to do anything -- just spinning your wheels like mad. You go over the thing again, and again, and you can find no solution. And the emotions get more and more tense. It's because, of course, you're not engaged in any action at all. And you're just torturing yourself. But, you're just grinding away at it. And you waken up in the middle of the night, and you're thinking of the same thing, "What am I going to do about that?"

Now, do you worry? Now, worry is what gods alone do. Only gods have to worry. People like us don't have to worry. And that's true you see. You see, the reason you worry is because you think you're alone in charge. And you think you have to ensure that this thing goes a certain way, and if you don't ensure it you're lost. Now, that's the attitude of a god. Only a god worries. Now, our dear God doesn't worry. But you see, only a god has the right to worry. Creatures like us, who are limited in what we can do, and who can depend on him to love us and take care of us, there's no point in us worrying. So the only people who worry are people who think they're God, and who think they have, not only the responsibility of making sure their life goes right, but they want that responsibility, because they believe that their idea of right is the only right.

And so we don't really worry about getting married. We don't really worry about finding the girl or the guy that God wants. We worry because we're afraid that the guy or girl that he wants will not be the guy or girl that we want. So we worry, not just to find whether we'll find the right girl or the right guy, but whether we'll find 'our' right girl or 'our' right guy. And so we worry because we're afraid that things won't go the way we want them to go. And loved ones, that's at the heart of all of our tension.

That's another way you can find out where carnality has a grip on your life. Where do you ever feel strained? Where do you ever feel strain? Is it up here when you're in front of people? Do you feel strain then? Or, where in your life is there strain? Is there strain in your relationship with your mum, or strain in your relationship with your roommate, or with you loved one? Now, that's a clue. Wherever there's strain there's carnality at work. Strain comes from a little fly on this world wanting something that God does not want for them at that moment. That's where strain comes. A little fly wanting something different from what God wants for him.

And so, wherever you have strain in your life, that's where 'self' wants something to go the way you want it to go. But do you see, that tonight, your God is at peace? He's at peace. I mean, you can't imagine our Father being all worked up and popping the old pills like mad. I mean you feel, "Sure he's at peace. He and Jesus are just in love with each other, and are calm and at rest." And yet everything in your life isn't perfect; sure it isn't! And yet he loves you. Now, if he's at peace, and things in your life are not yet perfect, then can you not be at peace, too? Is he not at peace because he knows what his plans are? He knows he's going to work the thing out. And can you not be at peace also, even if there are a half dozen things that are unfinished, and still aren't absolutely right? Can you not be at peace, if the great God who loves you and who sees the future, is at peace this moment?

Loved ones, where there's strain in your life, you're wanting something that God doesn't want for

you. And that's self will! And that's carnality! And I'd encourage you to track it down, and not be afraid of it. Don't try to look away from those things. Those are blessed symptoms that God allows to come. Wouldn't it be terrible if there were no symptoms of diseases -- physical sicknesses and diseases? We'd never know what to do to correct sickness, if we couldn't see the symptoms. So it is in our own lives, the Father lovingly gives us first of all outward symptoms -- things that are wrong: stealing, swearing, gambling, adultery, fornication. Those are plan outwards symptoms that we're not right with him. Then he lovingly gives us these symptoms of worry, and anxiety, and strain, and selfishness, and anger to show us that there is a place in our lives where there isn't absolute peace, where we're at 'dis-ease' with our maker -- where there is a 'dis-ease' between us and our maker.

And really, carnality is just that. It's the will wanting something that God doesn't want. It's the will wanting to get things from other people and circumstances that God will give us, if we are prepared to trust him only. And of course, the Father is delighted when you will trust him for all the enjoyment that you need, and when you will trust him for all the happiness that you need. It delights his heart. That's why he put you here. It delights him when he sees you trusting him for all the security that you need, and when there is no sign of worry and anxiety in you to indicate that you don't. And he delights when he sees you trusting him for your importance, and your approval, or your position and sense of identity in the world. It delights him when he sees you trust him for that. Then there comes a great peace in your heart.

I was talking to a friend who had done some snorkeling and he was telling a funny story, of course, where he almost drowned himself because he went down too deep. And he was saying -- I'm sorry, scuba diving, because there's only so far you can snorkel. But he went down maybe twelve or fifteen feet. And you know the way on the top of the water, when there's a storm -- well it's chaotic there. But even -- it's interesting, twelve or fifteen feet deep, if it's very rough, the water, you still have a lot of turbulence down there. And that's as far as he could go, and of course he eventually got sick with the turbulence. But the other bright guys are down about thirty feet. And there it's beautiful. There is absolute peace. Everything just goes like that, very slowly, and very quiet and restful. And you have no idea of the chaos up above on the surface.

That's it. If you would be buried with Jesus, if you would be willing to die with him to all this surface stuff, to what people think of you in the office, to what people think of you here in this body, if you'd be willing to die to your ability to scrounge enough dollars to ensure your own financial and physical security, if you'd only be willing to die to those things and fade out of that world, and be willing to sink into this deep world where God alone is the source of your life, you'd experience a peace and a rest that you cannot believe possible. And loved ones, that's what it is. You know, I'm not a Baptist and I'm not pushing emersion. But it is interesting isn't it? It is interesting when a person goes under the water, they lose contact with the life sources above the water. They no longer can breathe the air of the rest of the world up there. They're no longer in contact with the people up there who made them feel good, or made them feel bad. They no longer can grab up for their dollars or their checkbook. They're under the water. They're in a different world. They're cut off as we were cut off in the flood. They're cut off from that external world.

And that's what being baptized into Christ Jesus means. And any of us here who suffer a lack of rest in our lives, or suffer strain, or anxiety, or worry, or anger, or sarcasm, or critical spirit, it's because, really, we have not accepted that full baptism into Jesus' death. And it's as if some of us -- well we have a hand up on the cross, but the rest of us is squirming down here, trying to get that hand off. Or some of us have maybe two hands up, but we've got our feet on the floor

because we “Couldn’t trust everything to this cross here. No, it might pull me apart.” So we keep our feet on the ground in some area of our lives. And wherever you’re keeping your own feet in control of things, that’s where the strain will be. That’s where the disease will be. That’s where the carnality is.

But when you at last say, “Lord Jesus, I’m willing to hang with you. And whatever comes to you, I’m willing for it to come with me.” When you come to that place, there’s rest and peace. There’s a oneness between your will and Jesus’ will. And the Holy Spirit is, of course, able then to flood in the resources of the Father. Because, do you see, the Father isn’t going to flood in his resources if you’re worshiping some other God? And that’s it. So you may say, “Well, you know brother, I’ve tried. I’ve tried to trust God for things. But I just find he doesn’t come through with me the way he comes through with other people!” Well, that’s because you haven’t put everything into his hands. That’s because you’re still trusting other things. You’re still depending on yourself in some way. Only when you come into dependence on him only will he release all the powers of his Holy Spirit into you.

But loved ones, that is God’s will for us. So I would really encourage you over this Christmas time, don’t fly away from those little signs you see in your own life of carnality. Let us be a group of brothers and sisters who are determined to be saints. And let us be a group of brothers and sisters who will help each other to go on into perfection. And don’t let’s cover things up. Don’t cover things up. Don’t pretend you’re baptized with the Holy Spirit, if you’re not baptized with Holy Spirit. Don’t pretend you’re delivered from carnality, if you’re not.

Let us be then a group of seekers. Let us be honest seekers who love each other, and love Jesus, and know we’re going to heaven because of what he did for us on Calvary, but knowing that there is a fuller experience of his death and his resurrection that will make him like us here on earth. And let us go together in that direction. And I would encourage you to do that. I see no reason -- I was so glad when I heard that there was an answer, when I heard that you could be delivered. I was so glad! I didn’t care – and I was a Methodist minister. You’re supposed to be kind of holy at that point, but I didn’t care who knew or what they thought of me. I was determined I would get through to this. And I would encourage you to do that.

Old Finney [Charles Finney, 1792-1875, American Presbyterian minister] you remember whom we’re studying in family group says, “It is a great step forward when a man or a woman admits, ‘I do not have this blessing. I am not baptized with the Holy Spirit in this way. I may have experienced some tongues, or some other things, but I have not been cleansed in my heart like this. I am not filled with the Holy Spirit. I am not delivered from self or carnality the way you described.’” That’s a great step forward, loved ones, when you declare that, and declare yourself to be a seeker.

And one of the things that I’m suggesting that we might do in the New Year, is have times up in the lounge, when we could just go after the evening service and seek God for whatever each of us needs. But over this Christmas time I would encourage you, don’t be all cut up. It is right: anger is wrong. And it is a sin. And it is a declaration of your godhead! It is! It is your rebellion against God. It is you, challenging the very position that God has in the universe. It undoubtedly is. Any carnality is just that. It’s you challenging God’s position. So it’s sinful, exceedingly sinful, beyond anything that we can describe.

But really see it as something that God is using to show you what you have to track down in your own

life. And track down, and track down, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, until you come to the heart of self. And you know, if you're like me, you'll be sick when you see the sight, because you have an idea -- maybe you're pretty fed up with yourself in different ways -- but when you see yourself as the Holy Spirit shows you, with judgment day honesty, you'll be amazed at the monster that has been hiding inside this apparently Christian exterior. And then you'll see that the only thing is for that to be slain. And of course, it's only when you see that that's the only answer that you're at last willing to enter into it, because up until the last moment, we're hoping that we'll somehow manage it a nicer way, or an easier way. If there were an easier way, God would have found it. But Calvary is the only way loved ones.

Now, are there any questions loved ones?

Question from Audience:

But didn't Jesus get angry?

Response from Pastor O'Neill:

Well, I tried to mention that you know, this morning, that some of us I think, take Jesus wrath against the money lenders and the temple, and we say, "Yeah, yeah, that's just what I get like when somebody tramps on my toes." But I think there are some distinctions. I think it's good to see that Jesus was first of all expressing God's hatred of the hypocrisy that was in the temple, and he was reacting against what these men were doing to God's temple. It wasn't against something that they were doing to him himself. So in that way I think it was an unselfish reaction.

Then the other thing was, it wasn't just madness! It was a controlled -- in fact, it fitted into the prophecies of the Old Testament that he would do this. And so it was a controlled reaction against wrong that was being done to God. And I think that's the distinction. I think when we show anger, it's usually selfish, and it's usually utterly uncontrolled. It's usually just on behalf of ourselves.

But you're right, the Bible does say, "Be angry and sin not." So there is an anger, there is a wrath against wrong being done to God, that is controlled. And that is possible. I've just -- I've always taken the attitude that maybe when I'm a 90 year old saint I'll be able to show that kind of anger. Until then I'll steer clear.

I have that little tract, "Free to Live", that guides you how you could pray through loved ones. "Free to Live". It's down in the bookstore. But there are books by Andrew Murray. "Absolute Surrender" is good. "The Normal Christian Life" by Watchman Nee is good. Those books give you a hunger for this. And of course, that's what we need because society has gotten used to such a low level of Christianity that it's hard to get a hunger now, because everybody is busy rationalizing their sin. And what I found I needed was a whole new standard of Christianity! I had such a low standard of it.

So I would encourage you loved ones, to seek God and not be satisfied with anything less than a clean heart, because that's what makes the saints, the communion of saints, a fragrant experience that is health giving and that is beautiful. And it is what of course, will transform your own witnessing life and your own home life. And I believe it will transform this dear world.

Let us pray. Dear Lord, we would begin to look straight at the failures of our lives instead of always turning away from them, as if that would make them better. Lord, we intend to look at those symptoms squarely in the face. So Lord, we would ask you to make us aware by your Holy Spirit, when we are irritable, or when we get angry. And begin to encourage us to be reflective people who will reflect on our own behavior, and examine why we did that, and look at our motives, and begin to see in what ways we are really subtly running our own lives. Even though we call you our God, and even though we say we are bought with a price, and we are not our own, help us to see that there are ways in which we regard ourselves as our own, and in which we're refusing to be bought with the price, and therefore refusing to be totally redeemed.

So Lord, we would pray that you would make us a group of humble seekers after clean hearts, and that you would enable us to be a help to each other and an encouragement to each other, knowing that the work has been done and is all available to us the moment we are willing, and able, and ready to enter into it.

And Lord we look forward to this Christmas time. Thank you for the opportunities it will give us to face our relatives and our friends. Lord, we realize they often bring the worst out in us. But we know it's because the worst is there to be brought out. And it's just that we cover it over with our friends. So Lord, we look forward even to being with our relatives, and our families this Christmas time. We pray that by your Holy Spirit, you'll make us a blessing to them; that you'll keep us in victory.

But Lord, wherever there is a taint of strain, wherever there is a touch of irritability, will you enable us to face it honestly, and to pray about it, and to ask you Holy Spirit, to bring us to that blessed place where there's absolute peace and rest in our hearts with what our Father has for us?

Father we thank you for that. We thank you that you do love us; that you have placed us here in this world and we are not at the mercy of husband, or wife, or son, or daughter, or father, or mother, or professor, or boss, or employer. Lord, we're in your hands, and you do all things well. And so Father we can afford to be at peace this night and every moment of our lives. Father, we long and look forward to that rest, the 'second rest' reserved for the people of God, where we cease from our laboring, and we rest in your strength and power through the Holy Spirit.

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 ever more. Amen.