

Freedom and Burdens of the Spirit

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

If you have been in love you know how enjoyable it is and how freeing it is. Maybe it's good to make a distinction between the old infatuation thing and real love, because I am sure many of you have been like me who were infatuated and tried to make a relationship go that wouldn't really go because it was one sided. And that's so different from love where both of you love each other and there's a freedom, a fragrance, and a liberty about it that makes nothing work. There's nothing that seems work or labor, everything seems easy and light when two people are in love.

I'm sure that's what all of us who are married want to preserve in our relationships. Because of course, the battle is against all the burdens that you take upon yourselves as you begin to mature. And the battle is to keep the freedom, and I have to use the word again, because it's such a good word, the gayety of the original love. So a love relationship is a beautiful thing whether it's between a man or a woman, or two dear friends who are men, or two dear friends who are women. There is a beauty and a freedom about love.

And of course, that love makes everything beautiful. If you see two people who are happily married you'll notice that actually they begin to look more beautiful as the days pass by. It's very noticeable at the beginning of a marriage a girl seems to look more beautiful when she's happily married, because love makes everything beautiful. It's a magical power and the beauty in our world comes from a great love affair. All the beautiful things that we see around us come from a great love affair that has been going on from before any of us were made, before the world was made.

The truth is that our Creator has a son called Jesus, and they are eternally in love with each other. All the things around us have been produced from that love. We shared a little last Sunday about the great privilege that we have because they resolved that they would share that love, and that's the arrangement they made for you and me. They made us so that we could share in their love. That's the whole purpose of our creation.

You remember how in my little diagram I drew God and Jesus, and then drew a little figure to represent you here on earth, and instead of Jesus loving his Father, directly through the Holy Spirit who comes through our spirits, he loves his Father through us. We take part in an eternal triangle that is the trinity family. So you remember, just to remind you of it again, how God gives to his son Jesus his great love, and his great care, and concern. Then Jesus gives it to you through the Holy Spirit and then you give it through the Holy Spirit, back up to God.

That is God's plan for us. You remember too, we shared that many of us have not liked to be at the disposal of God's Holy Spirit. We have not wanted our spirits to be ruled by him, and we have cut ourselves off from that trinity family love and of course, it leaves a great emptiness in your heart, a terrible sense of nothingness, a terrible sense of having no purpose, a terrible sense of having no meaning, or no position in the world.

Then you remember, how we shared, we try to marry ourselves to this dear old earth here. We try to marry ourselves to all the people, and all the things, and all the experiences, and circumstances in it to try to get from them the joy and the light that we have through God's love. Of course, it

doesn't happen, our spirits get all poisoned, and our spirits get caught up with what are people thinking of us, and our spirits get caught up with trying to get more things to make ourselves happy and secure, and our spirits get caught up with trying to have more happy experiences to give ourselves a sense of exhilaration.

Loved ones really, your spirit is the inside part of you and it is the real you and what your spirit is, that's what your heart is and that's what you are. Of course, many of us instead of having spirits that are eternally in love, and that's why I mentioned a love relationship at the beginning, instead of having spirits that are eternally in love, and eternally clean, and joyous, and pure, and happy, many of us have little miserable shrunken spirits. That's why so many of us have real trouble in living the way we know we're supposed to live, because our spirits are all shrunk, and poisoned.

If you looked into your spirit at all, you'd see it's a miserable petty little thing all caught out with the bank balances, and all caught up with whether the car is going alright or not, and all caught up with what so and so is thinking of us at work. Many of us have little shriveled spirits that are not worth anything and they're dried, they're like dry raisins, there's no fruit, or juice, or life that flows from them. That's why many of us have real trouble producing any good thoughts or good feelings. That's so why many of us just try to imitate other people from our soul out we try to imitate other people. We try to dress like other people, try to feel like other people, we try to think the way we're supposed to think, but it's all because in here there's no life, there's no juice, there's no beauty, and there's no fragrance.

Now, what I'd share with you is, it is possible to have within you a spirit that is filled with fragrance and life. It is loved ones. It's possible to be eternally in love. You know the way we make fun of somebody who is love, because this guy who is a steel worker starts writing poetry, and this girl who is a very efficient typist starts looking dreamy eyed. All of us have a funny feeling that that's really the way it was meant to be. When we sing, or say, "all the world loves a lover" we really know that there's some truth in that, that when we see two people in love, they seem to be living the way we were meant to live.

Loved ones, that's the way we were meant to live, and that's the way you are meant to live, and that's the way you're meant to sense inside your spirit. You're meant to have a spirit that is taking part in this beautiful flow of love in the trinity family. If it's not, you know, it's just because you have cut the connections here and you've welded artificial connections here. If your spirit is shrunk, and kind of stale, and stodgy, and lacks that sense of lightness and liveliness that you know, isn't it a beautiful thing about God that he has made us so we all know what we're talking about tonight? We're all in different stages but we all know what we're talking about. We know the difference between being heavy inside in your spirit, and born down by all kinds of worries and anxieties, and being light the way you were when you were five or six years old and your mum and dad looked after everything for you. We know the difference between those things. Loved ones, if your spirit is stale, and heavy, and stodgy, and shrunken, and petty, it's because you really have cut these things and you've soldered these connections so they're massive chains that are shackling you.

Really if you find your spirit heavy, and compressed by the other people in the office so that you go into the office and you're suddenly you're all concerned about whether they approve of you, or whether they love you, it's because you're too dependent upon them. You are. You're just far too dependent upon them. You're just far too preoccupied with what they think of you, and actually it's

just foolishness because they have no power over you at all. They'll die probably before you will, and after this life is over they'll have no ability to say anything about your eternal destiny and you're just a fool for paying any attention to what they think of you at this time.

Bosses come and go, and workers come and go, and really in a week or two, or a month or two, or a year or two times, it won't matter what they think of you so there's a great unreality in it. But loved ones, until you determine that you will once and for all take your place with our dear savior on that cross, and die to what those people think of you, you will not experience that liveliness of spirit that is God's will for you. So it is very important to come into one thing that Mark mentioned and a thing that Laurie sang about, it's very important to come into the Savior, because of course that's the only way this whole thing can be changed you see.

What Jesus did on the cross was he took that little personality of yours that is so bound to these things, and so incapable of experiencing the Holy Spirit of Jesus coming through you, he took that and he put it into himself and he destroyed it on the cross and our old self was crucified with Christ. When you're willing not only to believe that but to allow it to happen in you, then of course a great cross experience takes place in you and you find yourself raised above the world and separated by the cross from the world so that you're preoccupied with this trinity family experience.

Of course, all other things then are added unto you because the beauty of it is God does not leave you, he takes care of the things in your life that you are utterly preoccupied with at this present time. He takes care of your relationships with people, takes care of what they think of you and what they don't think of you. He takes care of the things that you need for your life, the clothes, and the cars, and the houses. He takes care of that. He provides that as a natural outcome of your doing his will in the world, whatever that job or that will may be. And he takes care of your circumstances, gives you enough good circumstances and enough bad circumstances to keep you two feet above the world.

That's where we're to be, just about two feet above the earth all the time. And it's such a difference you know, to walk out in the morning two feet above the ground. It really is. It's so different when you come to the office and you're two feet higher than everybody else, and you're two feet higher than all the problems, and all the difficulties, and all the preoccupations, and the worries that everybody else is concerned about. And loved ones, that's the way we are meant to be.

I know it's put funnily when you say it that way, but that is really the effect of it. Inside, underneath your mind and emotions, that's your soul your mind and emotions, underneath your mind, and your emotions, and your will there's a spirit and your spirit can live two feet above the ground. And your spirit can share eternally in that love affair. Now that's really true loved ones and if you're sitting there tonight and you're thinking, "Well you're being a little poetic." Loved ones, that's the way we're meant to be.

We're meant to be in this love relationship with God, and with Jesus his son. There's meant to be that flow of Jesus' love coming through us and of course that brings a sweetness to life. I don't know how many of you have real trouble dealing with criticism from other people. I don't know if you have trouble dealing with some comment that you hear someone has made about you. And somebody says to you, "Oh yes, so and so said that about you."

And I don't know how you deal with that, but some of us have real trouble dealing with that and we try all kinds of little techniques for dealing with that criticism, but we're not really in victory over it. We're actually down here slogging it out with that thing even. We're not really in victory over it, we say, "Oh well, well, he has his opinion you know." Or, "Well, he often says that kind of thing ha-ha." And you know we whistle a merry tune and walk away two feet under the ground really.

Loved ones, that's because our spirits are not in good shape you see. Because, when your spirit is taking part in this kind of love with the Father and the Son, you'll blow right over the top of it. You don't even think of it, it's no big deal at all in your heart, and you continue to walk in lightness. You really do loved ones. There's a difference, you see between this victory and the kind of victory that we can work out ourselves by agony.

It's the same you see with worries. You know when we have worries we worry about the exam, or we worry about our career the way it's going, or we worry about our money troubles. And then we try to deal with the worry, and we try all the techniques. Carnegie (an American philanthropist) "Let's imagine the worst thing that could happen to me. I could die. Could I face that? Yes, I could face that." We try all the little tricky techniques, or we try rearranging the checkbook stubs, or we try to think differently about the thing. "Let me think of the good things that will happen to me. Let me think of vacation, let me think of happy times."

Well loved ones, it's not really victory it's just down there slogging it out even. But do you see when your spirit is light, filled with Jesus' Spirit taking part in the love relationship with God the Father and the Son, you fly right over the top of those things, you do, you just lift above them. It's just as if it's a mountain and the wind, the air the hot air comes along and just rises over the top of the mountain. That's what happens when your spirit is in good shape. So it is important loved ones, to really know that your spirit, the real you inside is in its right position in relationship to Jesus and God the Father.

And if you say, "Well, how do I make sure that that's so?" Well, note where there is staleness, note where there's heaviness and then ask the Holy Spirit. You see, he's the one that connects your spirit up with God and Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, show me, show me if there's any way in which I am not living as if God is my Father and Jesus is my dearest friend and savior. Show me if there's any way in which I'm depending more on the world than I am on them. Show me." And the Holy Spirit will show you that.

Often, it's things like resentment. We have all kinds of deception in our lives, those of us who are born of God, even those of us who are filled with the Holy Spirit. We have all kinds of resentments, all kinds of things that we think should be our right, all kinds of things that we think our wives should do for us, or our friends should do for us, or our sons or our daughters should do for us. All kinds of things that we think our colleagues should do for us. And we have sneaking resentments that develop in our hearts.

And of course, those lift us right out of this trinity family because the trinity family has no time for that stuff. The trinity family has constant love, and openness, and delight, and joy. So when you get a resentment, or you take something into your heart, and you begin to resent some thing, or some body, or even some circumstance you're in, I think many of us get into that, "Well, I wish I hadn't been left to look after my mother." "Well, I wish I hadn't been left in this situation." "Well, I wish I had had the opportunity so and so had." We begin to live with a resentment inside

us that forms a hard knot in our stomach and of course begins to defile our spirit. And immediately we begin to acquiesce in that, we're pulling ourselves out of this light spot that we have in the trinity family and we sink to earth with a thud like that. And we immediately begin to be incased again in the earthiness of the earth.

So if you find that your spirit is not fragrant, that it is not sweet, that it is not fresh, that it is kind of heavy, and petty, and down, ask the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, show me why I'm like this. Show me what weight there is here." See, it is like a hydrogen balloon, you know, or a hot air balloon, all that's necessary to lift the thing is there and the spirit will lift loved ones. God has put you into Jesus and has crucified you, destroyed you completely and raised you up with him, and is sitting now at the right hand of God. That's where you are with Jesus, that's reality.

And so in order not to experience that reality, you actually have to be like a hot air balloon that has anchors in the ground and large ropes tied to them holding it down to the earth. Because, the natural tendency of your human spirit in the light of what God has done to you in Jesus is to rise up and to take part in this love family. And so if you're not doing that it's because you have ropes of some kind tying you to the earth. So ask the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, is there any way in which I'm tying myself to this old earth?"

Of course, it's almost always loved ones, connected up with this great trio here. It's almost always connected up with people, or things, or circumstances. Always you're expecting too much of people. You're expecting too much of them or you're too dependent upon them and they're not coming up with what you think they should and so it's not long before you begin to resent them. Or it's things, you're too tied to things, you're too preoccupied with what you own, or you're too preoccupied with what you don't own and what you'd like to own. Or, you're too preoccupied with accumulating more things, or when something happens to your things you get all upset.

You've tied yourself like a little machine to your car, or to your clothes, and so when anything happens to them you immediately are affected too. Or, you're too wrought up with circumstances, you're too caught up with, "Well, if I had a better situation at work, if I had a nicer office to work in, or if I had a nicer living situation." Your eyes are too taken up with the outward circumstances in which you live. But loved ones, usually it's that famous trio there that pulls you out of the more famous trinity trio that wants to have you as part of their family.

So it is important to be real about that. I would encourage you not to stop anywhere short of a pure clean spirit. Really, I wouldn't put up with the stuff loved ones. And I know why many of us do. Many of us do because the Christendom has devised a low level of Christianity. And the level is, as long as you're doing outwardly what seems Christ like, you can't expect everything to be absolutely pure and clean from within. Well loved ones, that's hypocrisy, it's not Christianity, it's just hypocrisy.

In actual fact, we are meant to be pure and clean inside. And every time you find anything less than that, any critical spirit coming out to another loved one, any resentment coming out to another loved one, see that that is not God's will for you and that you will never, never come into victory over life unless you get clear of that defilement, so do loved ones, put up with none of it.

Brothers you know, from the cleanliness that we're to have in our hearts, to sisters the cleanliness that we're to have in our love for each other, right the whole way through. Don't put up with anything don't let a hard heart grown inside you. Your heart is your spirit, that's the very heart

of you and that's what is to feel good, to smell sweet, and to be sweet, and fresh, and fragrant. That's God's will for us.

Now loved ones, when we're like that it is interesting but God is able at last to begin to do something through us. When our spirits are like that he's able to do something through us, because here's what's happening. God is involved in trying to rescue not just you up here, but actually three and a half, and I think it's now four billion of us miserable little insects from that same slavery. And God is involved in trying to get us all to experience what he has done to us on the cross in Jesus.

So he is working towards that end. But, he has a definite plan for it with your mum and dad, with your sons and daughters, with your colleagues, with our friends. God has a definite plan for doing it. So he has brought about the miracle on the cross but he also is in charge of applying that miracle to all our friends, and all our colleagues, and to the whole world. And so God has a great salvation campaign a foot and he is directing it.

Now, the way he does it is he requires someone here on earth to want what he wants. He requires someone here on earth to want what he wants. In other words, having sent Jesus to earth, that's all God is able to do from the point of view of exerting his will here on the earth. Now that Jesus has risen to be with him, God depends on miserable little creatures here on earth wanting the same thing as he wants so God can have a definite plan for Jim's dad, or for Vern's colleague at work. Or, God can have a definite plan for my brother, or for Jim's mother in Pennsylvania.

God can have a definite plan for each of those loved ones in order to bring them on to the cross with Christ. But the only way he can bring that about is if Jim, or Vern, or Jim, or me hear from God what he is intending to do and ask him to do it. Now that's right. God is only able to touch another one's life if one of us whose spirits are free, and who are therefore able to hear from him what he's intending to do, ask him to do that thing.

Now that's enshrined you remember, in that verse we've often looked up together and I'd just ask you to look at it, Ezekiel 36:37. "Thus says the Lord God: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their men like a flock." It just is so strange to put it that way. You feel like saying to God, "Well, if you know that they need to be increased now after this experience, why don't you just increase their number?" But God puts it clearly this way, he says, "This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them." And so God knows what he wants to do for the house of Israel but until somebody here on earth asks him to do it he is not free to do it.

Now loved ones, I'm sure we'll understand the whole mystery of that when we get to heaven but I'm sure that part of it is the whole protection of our free will that God wants to continue to exercise so that he does not just intervene in our affairs here on earth overwhelming our free will and doing whatever he wants, but so that redemption and redemption grace can only be experienced when we ask him for a certain thing.

Now loved ones that's the way God works and you remember, Jesus stressed the same thing when he said in Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." God knows what is needed because there's another verse in scripture you remember, that says, "God knows already what you need." So God knows it but he can only act when you yourself realize what he wants to do and that is called a burden of the spirit.

That's what I'd just like to share a few minutes about, burdens of the spirit. That's a burden of the spirit that God is putting on your heart. Now, do you notice that it's very different from weights that Satan puts upon you? When your spirit is heavy with weights that Satan puts upon it, then when you resist those weights, they're lifted and they go away. Moreover, Satan's weights tend to throttle your mind and throttle your whole personality so that you are unable to act, or pray, or speak.

But burdens of the spirit that God puts upon you are joyous things. That's why Jesus said, "Take my burden upon you for my yolk is easy and my burden is light." Burdens of the spirit are joyous things, they're delightful things. And as you pray the burden is released. And so a burden of the spirit is given to move you to pray, or to speak, or to act. Whereas, a weight that Satan puts upon you is given to throttle you and prevent you from any action, or any speaking, or any praying.

So loved ones, the way that God works is Jesus himself, do you know what he's doing in Hebrews 7:25 at this moment? Maybe it's good to be clear what Jesus is doing at this moment. Hebrews 7:25, "Consequently he is able," Jesus, "For all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." So Jesus at this moment is interceding to the Father for us and for the plan that the Father has for applying the resurrection of Christ to the world. But do you see how he intercedes? He does not intercede to the Father directly. He's living ever to intercede for us but he intercedes through us.

So if you say, "Do you mean that Jesus' intercession is limited in its power by the fact that he has to find one of us who will receive his burden and will pray it up to the Father?" Yes loved ones, that's it. Jesus intercedes through us to the Father. Now you see how different that whole way of praying is to sympathetic prayer. You see how far we are from that kind of – that's called a prayer of faith. A prayer of faith is one that Jesus puts in you through his Holy Spirit. It's a burden that he gives you, a thing that he knows God intends to do but he knows he cannot do it until you ask him to do it so he gives you that request.

That is so different from the praying that we pray when we're two feet under the ground, or when we're slogging along overwhelmed, "Oh my finances, they're coming part." "Oh, that person she's never going to marry me." "Oh, my career is coming apart." "Oh Lord, what will I do?" Loved ones, when you're in that situation the one thing you have no time to listen for is what Jesus is saying to you. The one thing that you have no time to be concerned with is what God is intending to do in your situation.

You're so utterly preoccupied with yourself, and so utterly taken up with your own troubles that you cannot hear anything that Jesus is giving to your spirit. Indeed, you're spirit is not light, it's not free, it's not liberated, it's heavy. And loved ones, that's why we have so many unanswered prayers, you know. Because, they're not prayers at all, they're just those old foxhole cries for help and they bear little relationship, most of them, to anything that God intends to do in our lives or in the lives of our friends.

And really, the only way to come into the kind of victorious prayer that you read about in George Mueller, you remember, with all the answers to prayer by which he built those homes for children and for orphans, and people like the Welshman Rees Howells, the only way to come into that kind of victorious prayer is to come into a freedom of your spirit where you commit unto God the things that you normally are supposed to be concerned with in your own life and you enter into this love

relationship with the trinity family, and then at last God is able to lay on your spirit what he intends to do in the lives of your friends, and your relatives, and your colleagues, and in the life of the loved ones in China, and Africa, and India.

Now, that's God's plan for us, that we should receive burdens of the spirit from him. And I'd just remind you of that illustration that we've used before that Nee gives, you remember, of the little guy who was out in the garden digging away and his dad says to him, "John, will you come over and help me here?" And John says, "Well wait Dad, I have something in my hands at the moment." And he hasn't freedom to go and do what his father wants him to do because he's got something in his hands that he's preoccupied with.

And loved ones, you see what – really what a mess it is. All us little moles poking around with our noses in the earth trying to get enough little nuts to keep ourselves alive until the winter is ended, and trying to get enough little clothes on to keep ourselves warm, we haven't a moment to listen to that person up there. We don't. We're so taken up with what we're doing.

So you see, before we can enter into any real burdens of the spirit, we ourselves have to come free of this preoccupation with ourselves, preoccupation with our lives, preoccupation with getting them going right. We have to actually live as if we're dead, we really do. We have to come to a death to all that stuff and say, "Lord, you're our Father. You take good care of this world and the whole universe; you can certainly take care of me. Lord, I want to love you and to trust you. Lord Jesus, thank you that you both are the meaning of life and I want to love you, and praise you, and be with you, and I'll take care of my things as you guide me to, but will you add all other things unto me that I need? And now Lord Jesus, what are we about here? What do you want to do? You know what your Father intends to do in India, what do you want me to do to enable him to do that?"

Loved ones, that's God's plan. There's a lot more to say, you can guess. I'd just share one more thing that you need to ask the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, what is this burden for?" Because sometimes it's a burden for prayer. As Paul said in Galatians you remember, "I am in travail that Christ may be fully formed in you." Sometimes it's a burden for prayer. Sometimes it's a burden such as Jeremiah had for speaking to someone, saying something, voicing something, in your office, or to a friend. Sometimes it's a burden for action. It's a burden that you have to do something and you need to act.

Now, it is important to know the difference there, you see. So that you don't lay on the rest of us some burden that you should actually be involved in. It's good to know, "Holy Spirit, what do you want me to do? Do you want me to act here in this situation, or do you want me to pray through on this? Or, do you want me to speak to someone?" And then of course to do that thing.

And I think, you know, most of you have had a little experience of burdens loved ones. Even though your spirits may have been very weighed down and very impure, most of us have experience, at least in the human realm of some problem. You know, you feel there's something that I haven't settled. There's something that I haven't settled. And you may think it's with a relationship at work. There's something I need to settle at the office. I need to make that thing right. And you know you can't really feel at rest inside until you make that thing right.

Or, you feel there's something I need to write, and I need to put it on paper, and I need to write a letter and that will settle it. And some business problem, and you feel, "I have to solve it. I have to take action." And then at last you take the action, you write the letter, and then you go

and sleep the sleep of a little child. Now, that's the kind of thing a burden is in the spirit, you see. Those happen to be burdens that are put upon us often by our own human spirits and often by other spirits, and often they're just burdens of the soul, but that's the kind of thing that a burden of the spirit is.

And so when you receive a burden and you sense, "Father, you do want me to go out in prayer for my grandmother." Then it is important that you do that. It's important that you set everything aside first of all, and you ferret out through the Holy Spirit's light what the burden is and then it's important that you bear that burden. And if it's a prayer burden it's important that you pray through on the burden. And many of us, of course, go astray there because, we don't pray through on the burden. We keep praying while we're still in the middle of the burden instead of praying out the other side of it.

Now, it might be good loved ones to look at just a few examples in Psalms of people praying through. And Psalm 54 is one of them. "Save me, O God, by thy name, and vindicate me by thy might. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. For insolent men have risen against me, ruthless men seek my life; they do not set God before them." So many of us stop there in our prayer and so we hear of somebody that's talking against us in the office and we're all borne down by it. And we know we shouldn't be borne down, and we know we should be rising above it and we go to God and we pray, "Well, Lord forgive them. Well, give me strength to rise above this. Well, help me Lord." And we go to bed at that level of prayer instead of going on through. "Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life. He will requite my enemies with evil; in thy faithfulness put an end to them. With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to thee; I will give thanks to thy name, O Lord, for it is good. For thou hast delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies."

Loved ones, unless you pray through on a burden, God may as well not have given you the burden at all. You have to stay with it and if you say, "Well, now do you mean all our prayers should be like that?" No, often your prayer times will be praise times, and worship times, and during that praise and worship time God will lay a burden upon you. So sometimes they'll come from the midst of your praise and worship, but sometimes they'll come from a real burden out of your ordinary every day life. But the important thing is to pray right through and out the other end of the burden. And really do. Don't be concerned about making sure you get all your other prayers in, pray through on that burden and pray through to lightness and life. And that's why God gave you it.

And then when you come out the other end, and you see – usually it is, see what we're doing, we're usually doing what Jesus did on the cross. Do you see that? He took all of us, with all our dirt, and all our sin, and all our rottenness, and our selfishness, and he lifted us back up into the relationship that he had with his Father. That's what he did. So when you're bearing a prayer burden, that's really what you're doing. You're with that Father in joy, and delight, and glory, and you're down here and you're getting some dirt on your feet as you walk along the road of life and you see a burden. And he gives it to you and you're lifting it up into the relationship that you have with him.

Do you see it's not enough to leave that light place that you have with God and get down there and start heaving the stuff up like that. You can't do it. And it's not enough to do one of those gestures you know, "Well Lord here. Yeah, well." No, you go right through with it, you lift it right up and that's what it is. It's drawing the world up into God's love and God's faithfulness. It's you in your heart triumphing over the apparent impossibility or the intractability of the

problem. That's it.

It's one little person here on earth seeing the solid massive obstacle, the massive sin, and seeing God more clearly right through it. And that's how the thing is lifted, and that's what enables God's Spirit to touch it. So you see, prayer burdens are very real things. See, it's not that heavily minded stuff you know, "Well, that's the burden but Lord I'm glad I can preoccupy myself with you." No, it's looking the burden straight in the face, seeing it solidly, and then getting back into your relationship with the Father so that you can see this thing lifted up into his presence.

Just a very little example, it was very easy at the beginning of our businesses to feel that you walk by faith not by sight. The best way to walk by faith is to not look at your bank balance because the sight of it would just steal any faith from you. And it's very easy in the early days to think, "Oh, that's the way to do it." And it's very easy to carry it on into your own personal finances, "No, I don't want to know how bad it is. No, I could never have faith if I knew how bad it was. What I've to do is to preoccupy myself with God's power, and God's strength, and God's manifold provision."

Well of course loved ones, that's not bearing a burden at all. The only ones who can bear burdens are those who can look at the finances, know the balances, know what the assets are, know what the liabilities are, know what the cost of goods are, and know what you're facing, and know what the interest rates are, and know fully every detail of the earthly situation. And then lift that up into God's light and power until you can see, "Yes Lord, you are going to lift every bit of that. You are going to triumph over every piece of it."

In other words, it's putting God's power and might against all our weakness and inadequacy on earth and it's seeing that God's power is greater. And it comes of course, partly through his promises, partly through seeing him as the Holy Spirit is showing him to you until he becomes so real that you see, "This God can lift anything even this detailed burden that I know so well." And then when you see it, when one little person here on earth sees that God not only can but will do it, then the thing is done. Then the answer is made real and the thing is settled.

And it may be three weeks later before the person's healed. It may be tomorrow when the money comes in, but it's done. The moment a person sees that God is able, and is willing, and has now done it, that moment it's done. But loved ones, that's the way God plans for us to operate, you know. So it is vital that we do it, especially since he has called us to get 10,000 of us into this world. And since we look around the world and see how it's falling apart in all directions, you can see the only way we're ever going to get into places like Russia, or even into the Middle East, or places like China, is if all of us here this evening, can begin to pray according to the burdens that God puts on our spirits instead of just offering up the little wishes that we have for ourselves and for our loved ones.

So it is important you know, to see that God has something definite for you to pray for this evening, something definite. And it will be something that is a natural preoccupation of your whole heart, something that you're very concerned about. It won't be hard, it will be very obvious. So I pray that you'll begin to move that way in your prayer life. And of course, immediately you do, immediately things will begin to happen around you, miracles will begin to take place.

Let us pray. Dear Father, dear Lord Jesus, dear Holy Spirit, we thank you for the holiness of this

evening, and we thank you for the holiness of our position. We cannot believe that you great beings have destined us to share in your family. Oh, we thank you, thank you. And Lord Jesus, we are just overwhelmed to think that your intercession is tied to our reading your heart and your mind.

Lord, we see what a privileged position we have. We see how we can crucify you afresh within us, bind you again, and put you into a tomb, or how we can release you and take those binding clothes off you so that you're free to wander through the earth, and to work miracles. We thank you that we have that great privilege. And we thank you Lord Jesus, that we are co-workers together with you, co-workers of God the Father. And that you have definite things that you plan to do in our lives this coming week, and in the lives of our friends, and our colleagues, and our relatives. And that you can begin to bring them about as we begin to bear our burdens in prayer, and bear our burdens in speaking and in doing.

And we thank you Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that these are ordered lives with direction and guidance that you have given us. Thank you Lord. We would give ourselves together to you, for your plans for this world during these next 20 years. And we ask you three dear beings: the Father; Son; and Holy Spirit, to use us to bring about your plans for your glory.

And 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 these coming weeks. Amen.