

Freedom from the Power of Sin

I John 3:9

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Sooner or later, we have to face it that we have to get into some things here and we have to get on with God. So, that's part of what I'd like to bring home tonight, loved ones, by pointing you to the verse that describes the normal Christian life. It's I John 3:9, "No one born of God commits sin." God is so good, he doesn't get caught up in a lot of qualifications; he just brings the truth home to us. "No one born of God commits sin." I think really our own conscience is a test whether that speaks to us or not.

Some of us here feel that's all right, I agree with that. Amen. That's because our conscience is right with God in regard to that. Some of us think wait a minute, that's a bit hard. I think if you feel that, you maybe ought to be more honest before God. Because, loved ones, the normal Christian life is that any of us who are born of God, we don't commit sin.

You remember where sin is described, and it might be good to look at it lest Satan bring us into false condemnation. Sin is described in James 4:17, "Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." So, that's what God's Word describes as sin. The philosophers may say that sin is any lack of conformity to absolute perfection whether a person knows it or not. God does not define sin that way. God defines sin as conscious, knowing, disobedience to what you know God wants you to do.

Now, I think we get into real trouble here tonight, if we go on past this sentence without being real about our own lives. So, loved ones, I do think that's why many of us get into confusion. We go on after this point and we refuse to be real. Now, I would question each one of us and myself included. Let us examine ourselves against the Word of God, and let us ask ourselves, are any of us here who say we are born of God, are we committing sin? That is, are we doing something that we know is wrong? We should be real, you see. I think that's where we get into difficulties and that's where all the confusion rises in your mind. Do you remember that Jesus said, anybody who does what I say will know the doctrine and will know that what I say is true? Now, the opposite of that is equally true. If you don't do what Jesus says, you'll be confused about the doctrine. Loved ones, just let's set ourselves, each one of us, against God's Word.

Do you say that you are born of God? Now, if you do, then you don't commit sin. That is, you don't do things that you know are wrong. All of us might not have been challenged to have Quiet Times. I understand that. In that case, you're not responsible for that. But, if God has spoken to you about a Quiet Time, a prayer time each day, do you carry that out?

Now, why I am laying all this on you is not to beat you to death. Loved ones, this dear Word has kept me from insanity. It will keep us all from insanity if we will face it and believe it. Really. So, please don't go all mushy on me and then say, oh, no, you're condemning me. I'm not condemning you. I'm saying to you we're walking on dangerous grounds in these days. We're walking in confusing and deceptive spiritual atmospheres and I am pleading with you to align your life with God's Word. Do you do things that you know are wrong? If you do, you're not experiencing the normal life of a

child of God, and you ought to be concerned, loved ones.

Nobody born of God commits sin. Now, if you say to me, well, do you mean if I don't have my Quiet Time once or twice? No, I'm sure God doesn't mean that. But, would you miss your Quiet Time more often than you'd hit it? Well, if you do, then you're learning and teaching yourself to despise that part of God's Word. Loved ones, you lose all sense of God's presence in your life, you will.

For some strange reason I feel I should stay on that for a moment. Do you see that nobody born of God commits sin? Take that at its lowest level. Let's say, commit sin habitually. It doesn't mean that. It doesn't say that. But, let's say commit sin habitually. Now, presumably we wouldn't say sin habitually is twice a day. We probably wouldn't even say it's three times in a week. We might say, well, does not commit sin maybe three times or four times in a month? Now, do you do that? I would press you a little here.

You remember, I John 3 says this is how you know the children of God and can distinguish them from the children of the devil. [I John 3:7-8] So, before we start extending that habitual sin too far, let's realize that there are many loved ones who aren't Christians at all who live very good lives. So, let's at least keep our habitual sinning above the level of the normal child of the devil. And, remember, they aren't committing adultery every day and they aren't murdering every day and they aren't telling lies every day.

Indeed, if you and I look at the loved ones that we work with, we know many dear people who aren't Christians and who are very kind and very honest. So, loved ones, I would just press all of us again. Would you first of all be real about your outward sins? That's what that verse is concerned about. No one born of God commits (The emphasis is "poieo". It's the Greek word that becomes poet -- you make or do something, poieo), nobody does sin. No one born of God does sin. That is, you can do sin by an act or by a thought or by a word. Now, nobody born of God disobeys God knowingly in act, thought or word. Now, do you do that?

Now, there's no difficulty, you see, with the emergency because, you remember, that's taken care of in I John, if you like to look at it. God is fair to us. He knows that we are not perfect beings and we have minds that wander, we have emotions that are easily moved at times, we have bodies that are weak and we are in a world that is infested with evil spirits, so he knows that we are not absolutely perfect in mind and emotions and body.

So, he provides for that, I John 2:1, "My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin." That's the normal life of a child of God. "But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." So, if you sin in an emergency, Jesus has died for us and God will look upon him and will forgive us because of Jesus' blood. But, you do see that it says, "I am writing this to you so that you may not sin but, if anyone does sin." I want you always to fill your car up with gas but, if by chance, you run out, then I have an arrangement for you. That doesn't mean that you run out every day, saying, well, he has an emergency arrangement. In other words, that is an emergency arrangement. God's norm for us is that we will not sin. So, I am asking you to examine your own life and me to examine my life.

Sin is disobedience to God's law. Some of God's laws, "Thou shalt not covet, thou shalt not commit adultery", and, of course, along with that, "if you look unto a woman to lust after her in your heart, you've committed adultery." Then, "thou shalt not steal", even if it's a person's reputation, thou shalt not steal. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." You won't tell

untrue things about another person. "Thou shalt not swear. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain." [Genesis 20:3-17]

Now, knowing the commandments and knowing what is right, do you commit sin in your life? Then, I would say if you can see some area of your life where you've just slipped into lower gear, then I would suggest to you that you deal with God tonight about that. Really. Because you can't go anywhere in regard to a holy and clean heart unless you first clean up your own life. If you say to me, "But, Brother, I thought God would do that." No, loved ones, God put into your spirit the Spirit of his Son and gave you a desire to be like him and he expects you to exercise your will to make your life conform to his image, at least outwardly. Loved ones, will you deal with that? Because if you don't deal with that, anything more that we talk of tonight is just like a tale told by an idiot. It makes no sense and you're going to get nowhere. You're just going to swallow a whole lot of doctrine and it's going to give you indigestion.

And you, yourself, are going to fall back. Loved ones, if you are born of God, are you doing the things that you know are right? Now, if there's anybody here who has stolen something or has been dishonest with somebody, boy, you should repent of that. Repentance is telling Jesus that you apologize to him for the pain that you've given him and you make restitution to the person or apology to the person. It would be good to clear up your life and, of course, what I'm encouraging you to see is that this cleans up, this cleans away all the darkness and all the confusion.

Loved ones, there's so much confusion about today because we're not taking sin seriously. We're not seeing that sin is hateful and blinding and deceiving and sin is the thing that sent Jesus to the Cross. It is the thing that has brought smears upon God's name and sin is what destroys people and destroys our God. Sin is straight from the pit of Hell. Whenever you touch sin, you're touching something that is alien to you, that you were not made for, that was not made part of you. The Bible always says, put the unclean thing far from you. Loved ones, put it far from you. As if you picked up dirt from the ground and just start dusting it off your hands. Get it away from you. That applies, you see, if Satan deceives you. He says, what's missing Bible study for one morning? What's big about that? Except that you miss it the next morning and then you hit it the third morning and then you miss it again the fourth. Until you have nothing that resembles any friendship at all. Because if you treated a friend like that, there would be no friendship. Loved ones, that's what it means.

I would encourage you to do what I had to do years ago and what I have to do now -- line my life up with God's Word and change my way of going, change my actions, change my words, change my thoughts. I think there are too many of us saying, oh, yeah, I know gossip is wrong, yes, I know, I know. Yes, yes, we shouldn't gossip, ha, ha. That's it. Well, we laugh our way to Hell. We will. Because gossip is a nail in Jesus' hands and it's a nail in the casket of your own spiritual life and then it's a nail in some other dear heart. Loved ones, unless you and I get serious about our outward sins, we have no hope of coming into this experience that we call holiness or sanctification. No hope.

First of all, you have to clean up your outward life. Do you know that this is what destroys a church? You understand that this is the way churches die. I don't know if you're aware of that. I mean most churches are dying, aren't they? They're just keeping going by the present excitement.

But, really, they're all going one way and they're going one way because the preacher is preaching to them obedience and how God hates sin Sunday after Sunday and most of us are indulging in sin because we all say, Christians are not perfect, just forgiven. With that great half truth, we are

throwing away a pearl. We're throwing away salvation because we're not driving ourselves into the arms of God. We're sliding down a slippery slope of a sinning life.

Now, loved ones, there is no such thing as a sinning Christian life. There isn't. Brothers and Sisters, if you say to me, "But, Brother, most Christians are sinning." That's right. You can see the effect that they're having on this nation. You can see the effect that they're having on the crime rate which is zilch, nothing. There is no change in the crime rate. There is no great change in the business practices of the nation, in spite of the fact that we're apparently in again another boom period for church attendance. Loved ones, there is no such thing as a sinning Christian. There may be a sinning church goer but there cannot be sinning Christians. Why? Because God's Word says it. No one born of God commits sin.

What is sin? Sin is knowing what is right to do and failing to do it. It's conscious, knowing, disobedience to God's Word. I remember that was what made me wonder if I would end up in a psych ward. Because I found that there was sin in my life and yet I said I loved Jesus. I could be loving Jesus one moment and sinning the next. Loved ones, that is not possible. One or the other is not true. Either you're not sinning or you're not loving Jesus. No one born of God commits sin and sin is conscious, knowing, disobedience to what you know God wants you to do.

Many of us come to a place where we have a life that is outwardly in conformity to God. I would point out that Plato had that, and Socrates. There are many holy men even of other religions that have conformed their outward life to the particular standard of perfection that they believe in. So, I would point out to you that it is possible to do that. Just as it's possible to speak in tongues, even if you're not a Christian. There are all kinds of ecstatic utterances that come from Buddhists and from Muslims. There are all kinds of ecstatic utterances in other religions, so just as his father would speak in tongues without being a Christian, so it is possible to conform your outward life to what you know you ought to do. So, that's the first step.

Now, many of us have done that. Many of us here are living in outward conformity to God's law. If we do sin, we know we have an advocate with the Father. If we find ourselves into involuntary sin, we do something, we suddenly realize I did that, that was mad, it hurt God, I'm sorry, Lord, I'm sorry. There are many of us who involve ourselves in involuntary sins. Many of us do things that we find out later are sins. We didn't know them. They're unconscious. The Bible provides for that. It's not a mortal sin. It's something that the blood of Jesus covers. Immediately we realize it, God witnesses in your heart, you are forgiven, my child, I know you didn't intend that, and we go on.

Many of us have come to that place where we live in outward conformity to God's law but we find within ourselves still a tendency toward sin. That is, we come into certain situations and we know we should not be angry and we do through the grace that the Holy Spirit gives, we do control our anger. May I point out to you again that there are many non-Christians that control their anger? Do you realize that? It's no great thing to control your anger. It's simply that we have been brought up in a generation that has encouraged us to let it all hang out and has encouraged us to think that you can't keep it in.

Well, you can keep it in and there are millions of us who have kept it in for millions of years. There are plenty of people that keep anger down and so a Christian is in that position. One who is born of God and still needs to have his heart cleansed by faith, he's in that position. He controls the anger but it does rise within him. He knows he shouldn't express it and he doesn't express it. But, he does it by willpower and yet it is continually a restless, discontenting thing inside him

because he finds he seems to have a bent toward sinning.

Many of us find that, after we're born of God, we find that we want to do what God wants us to do but there is something within us that seems to bend over the other direction. So, all the churches testify that after regeneration there remains within each person inbred sin or original sin. In other words, loved ones, you sin because you're a sinner. You're not a sinner because you sin. You're a sinner and therefore you sin. An apple tree bears apples. Until it becomes an orange tree, it can't bear oranges.

So, when we sin outwardly as non-Christians, we sin outwardly because our whole nature is that of a sinner and that is something that we have inherited from Adam, from our forefathers down through the years. For generations, the human race has lived without God. Ever since Adam decided to live dependent on the world and not on God, he passed on to his children that kind of attitude and they passed it on to their children and they lived without the Holy Spirit and not only did their mind become darkened and their understanding darkened, not only did their conscience become weak and their bodies sick but they themselves developed a whole inbred sin attitude.

Sin is living independent of God. So, there developed in our whole race something that the Bible calls our old nature, our old sinful nature. [Galatians 5:17] In other words, something that made it natural for us to sin, instead of natural to obey. So, those of us who are born of God, even though we avoid outward sin in act and thought and word, we still find within us a desire and a tendency to depend on people, on things, on circumstances, on the world. So, we find there is a battle that goes on within us and it's the battle described in Galatians, you remember, the flesh strives against the spirit. In no way does the Bible say that's the normal Christian life. In no way does the Bible state that's the way you have to go on through all of your life. Indeed, the Bible states the opposite: that it is possible to live in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

But, that verse in Galatians simply states a fact, that there is within us the Spirit of Jesus and yet there is this flesh that almost topples towards dependence upon people and dependence on things. It is what the Bible calls our old sinful nature. At times, it is called inbred sin. At times, it is called original sin. It is what old Paul talks about, you remember, if you look at Romans, and he's speaking there in Romans 7 as a Jew to Jews. He makes that clear, you remember, at the beginning of Romans 7:1, "Do you not know, brethren -- for I am speaking to those who know the law." So, he's speaking to the Jews who, of course, knew that their sins could be forgiven. You remember, there's a Psalm that says, "Blessed is he whose sin is covered, unto whom the Lord doth not impute inequity." [Psalm 32:1] So, the Jew knew that he could have forgiveness of sins.

But, do you see how Paul describes the situation of the Jew and it's the same as the situation of the Christian who is born of God. Romans 7:15, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate." In other words, there comes a time in all our lives when we are clear we want to do God's will. We want to obey him.

Now, we better watch it. Some of us think we're at that stage and that's why we have real trouble coming into a clean heart or into sanctification because we think we do that. We look at that and we say, that's right. I do not do what I want but I do the very thing I hate. Now, Paul really meant that. Some of us think we mean it. Some of us say, oh, yes, I really want to be patient. I really want to be like Jesus. I really want to be like him, to be meek, and to accept punishment and let people insult me. I really want to be like that and we don't really want to be like that. That's what takes some of us a little time in coming into full consecration.

Paul is saying that a person who is going on after God is in that position. "I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now, if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So, then, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me." You see, it's sin in the singular and sin in the singular is this inbred sin, this original sin, this old man, this old self, this old sinful nature and it is the sin in the singular that produces sins in the plural.

Loved ones, what God deals with is usually at the beginning, he deals with us over our sins, our acts and thoughts and words. Then, gradually he reveals, but do you see there's something still inside you that has a bent to do those things again. So, gradually, many of us become aware that there is something in us that is preventing us doing what we honestly want to do.

You remember, he goes on and says in verse 18, "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh." He doesn't refer there as other parts of the Bible do when they talk about flesh to the body, to the physical body. He's talking about the part of us that wants to depend on what comes through the body for our security, instead of what comes from God. So, he says, "Nothing good, that is in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me." So, loved ones, many of us have found ourselves in that position, that this thing is greater than us. That there's something in us that will not let us do what God wants.

Paul goes a little further because he knows that that power of sin or of living independent of God can never be eliminated from the world until Jesus comes. You see, it can't. That power of sin is in the world until Jesus comes. It is. There will always be that forceful power of life that operates independent of God. That's the life, you know, that tries to make people satisfied with the drug exhilaration instead of the exhilaration of the Holy Spirit. It's the deception that tries to make people satisfied with the love of friends without going through to the only love that is finally reliable, the love of God. That power will always be in the world and Paul knows that.

You can't eliminate sin from the world. The power of sin will always be there but Paul shows that there is something that is allowing that power to influence him the way it does. You see in Romans 7:21-23, "So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." Now, he says, when he talks about law, he is not talking about something that is handed down by the courts. He's talking about law in the sense of a natural law. For example, the law of gravity; it's a way of describing something that keeps on happening. He says, I see in my members, in my body, in my mind, in my emotions, in my whole personality, I see another thing that keeps on operating in a certain way and it brings me under the power of this sin.

Do you see Paul is beginning to get at the truth that we mentioned at the beginning? That our personality has a way of working that is not fitted for obedience to God. He brings it to a head, you remember, in verse 24. "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" That's how he describes it. He describes the old nature that cannot obey God as a body of death and in another place, you remember, as a body of sin because it's a body that is used by sin. When he refers to members it's not just our hand or our leg. He's referring to every part of our personalities. In other words, Paul says, I can't do what I want because this nature is not fitted for it and it makes me subject to the law of sin.

In other words, loved ones, what we find ourselves with after we're born of God is an old personality nature that is not fitted to obey God. So, the Spirit of Jesus moves within us and makes us want to do something and the whole nature that we have is falling the other way. That's why you feel you're lifting the whole world on your shoulders at times in order to obey God. You feel you're lifting a whole nature that isn't fitted for obedience and you are. You're lifting a whole nature that has developed over the years and that you have inherited from Adam. You can never change that nature.

It doesn't matter how many books you read about positive thinking or about modifying your temperament. You are involved in something that is supernaturally powerful and you cannot change it. That's why so many of us have such frustration when we try to change our personality. The glory is that God changed it in his Son Jesus. That's the meaning of Calvary. That's what God refers to when he talks about our old man. He says our old man was crucified with Christ so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin.

Loved ones, God has done that and it is the glory of every man or woman that has been used mightily by God, it is the glory of each one of them that they have, after conversion, after the New Birth, entered into an experience of that by faith because, what Jesus has done for us, we can experience here in this world. Loved ones, that's the key to the victorious life: that our old sinful nature was crucified with Christ.

Brothers and Sisters, if you say to me, don't so many churches teach that you'll have that old nature with you? But you remember Paul says, "He who has died is freed from sin." He says plainly in other verses, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." He says in Romans 6:1, shall we continue in sin? Then, he says, "By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?" In other words, his whole message is, it is possible not only to live in outward obedience to God's law in act and word and thought but it is possible also to be delivered from this bent to sinning.

George Müller [1805-1898] ran an orphanage in Bristol. I think most of us know of him and he writes like this in his diary, "I was converted in November 1825, but I only came into the full surrender of heart four years later in 1829. The love of money was gone. The love of place was gone. The love of position was gone. The love of worldly pleasures and engagements was gone. God alone became my portion. I found my all in Him. I wanted nothing else. By the grace of God this has remained and has made me a happy man, an exceedingly happy man, and it led me to care only about the things of God. This change was so great that it was like a second conversion."

Then there is George Fox, [1624-1691] who founded, you remember, the Quakers. "I knew Jesus and he was very precious to my soul but I found something in me that would not keep patient and kind. I did what I could to keep it down but it was there. I besought Jesus to do something for me and when I gave Him my will, He came into my heart and cast out all that would not be sweet, all that would not be kind, all that would not be patient, and then He shut the door."

Now, loved ones, the history of God's children is scattered with testimonies like that. Of men and women who are the same as ourselves. Men and women who we found were born of God but for a while fiddled around with that outward sin and that's why I shared that with you tonight.

First of all, you have to get rid of that. First of all, you have to do what you know is right. You have the power to do that. It's only Satan through our educational system and through our books that

suggest that we can't do what we know is right. You can. You have power over your outward body. Hand rise. Rise. Drop. Drop. That's right. You can do it. You can do it. Even with the cigarettes, even with the sex. You have power over your body and you know you have. You know that a man who has just managed to rush out of a fire, immediately when he falls to the ground, worn out and exhausted, immediately he hears that his little child is still inside, he has energy from nowhere to get back into those flames to save the child. We know when we're up against it; we have found that we can will ourselves to do what we ought to do outwardly.

Now, loved ones, that's the first step but many of us have found that many men and women have been like us and have come into outward conformity to God's law and have still found that they have a bent to sinning within. They do not do outward sin but they feel it within. They are not angry outwardly but they feel anger. They are not irritable to the other person. They clamp up their mouths and they are patient but they feel their irritability. They do not commit adultery and they reject the thought when it comes but they feel a bent towards it. They eventually come to that place that George Müller came to. He said, "There came a day when I, George Müller, died to self and died to sin."

Loved ones, the answer is that God has done it in Jesus and we receive it by faith. You cannot destroy that evil nature and you cannot strangle it. It is done in a moment by God, through the Holy Spirit. He manifests in you what he did in Jesus, his Son.

What have you to do? It's plain. It's in Romans, if you look at it. It's in Romans 6. It's so simple but it takes all you have. First of all the fact is stated in Romans 6:6. This is a fact. "We know that our old self, [our old nature, our old man, our old sinful nature] was crucified with him so that the sinful body [or the body of sin, the whole personality that is used to sin] might be destroyed and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died, is freed from sin." Then, he says, so in the light of that, it says, you were told that Jesus had borne your sins on Calvary and had brought you forgiveness. You were to believe that.

So, in verse 11, "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." You must believe that. You must have faith. Then, in verse 13, that's the trust, you see, and then the obey is in verse 13, "Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness." That's it. Verse 11 and verse 13. Believe it. Reckon it. Reckon that your old nature is crucified and from then on yield your whole personality to God's Holy Spirit. That's it, but it is by faith.

John Wesley said that it was a great day when he discovered that holiness was entered into by faith and not by works. That's it, loved ones. You enter into the destruction of the old sinful nature by faith and it can be yours this night. That's why all these men and women testify that it was done in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, because whatever is received by faith can be done in a moment because it's done by God. What is needed is a hunger and a thirst that will not give up until God does it in you.

So, each one of us need to deal with God. I'll tell you what I've seen in us when we come to this point because you know I've been off and on preaching this for 15 years. What happens when we come to this point is you forget that there's only one can bring you through to this and it is not Ernest O'Neill. It is not Leighton Carlson. It is not Robin Davidson. It is not Al Mullen. It is not a man. A man cannot bring you through to this any more than a man brought you to know that you were

forgiven by God. Only God himself can do this. But, he can do it, loved ones. It is possible to be freed from our evil, sinful nature so that we not only obey outwardly but we rejoice to obey in our hearts.

Now, I encourage you to seek this and to expect it every moment, to expect it every moment, and to yearn for it and to have no truck with irritability in your heart. Loved ones, let's declare war against sin in this body. Let's declare war against sin. Let's say, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to put up with it any longer" -- like that dear guy says in the movie. Say that. Do not put up with it. Refuse to put up with sin in your life. Say to Satan, you've had your day with me. You've had enough fun. No more. I am going to obey my God outwardly which is a reasonable thing for him to expect. I am going to obey him in act and thought and word and I am going to seek for a cleansed heart and deliverance from this sinful nature because Jesus has wrought it for me on Calvary and I know he has wrought it for me so that I'll experience it.

Loved ones, if you have set about it that way, and you'll determine not to make do with less, God will answer you. He will. If you will take Jacob's attitude and say I will not let you go unless you bless me, he will do it. If you say to me, what about all the people that are clinging onto my coattails and saying, well, do you believe that? Forget them. Forget them. You won't get anywhere if you listen to them. Forget them. Let them go. Let them do what they want to do. But if God's Word convinces you, and I encourage you to read it -- read I John 3, read Romans 6, read Romans 8, and see that it is God's normal will for us that we would be free from outward and inward sin. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness. Why should we put up with this criticism and this anger and this irritability and this dirt and this uncleanness when God did not intend us for it?

If you say, "Oh, Brother, you brought me under condemnation." Well, condemnation is only for those who won't change. Conviction is for those who will change. So, if you want to be like your Father, sure, you'll feel conviction. If you say to me, do you think it will drive me crazy? Yeah, probably it will. Yeah. Only, before you're through, you'll be pretty sick of yourself. You will. Because it's the most precious thing God has to give and he gives it only to those as Blaise Pascal [French Christian Philosopher, 1623-1662] says, "only to those who seek Him with all their heart." I pray that some of you will begin to seek him like this and seek him night and day until you come into holiness of heart and then, of course, it is true, holiness of life. Could I say again, on behalf of all the wee souls outside this auditorium, I know them, and they are desperate to see a holy people. Both our children and our peers, are dying to see some men and women who will live what they preach. If they could only see that, they'd believe the Gospel. I pray that there'll be some giants here who will go on through whatever the cost.

Let us pray.

Dear Father, we sense a little of how sin smells in your nostrils and has caused blood to flow in your own Son and has broken up the family of God and has created a monster of Satan and a dark and lonely state of Hell. Lord, we sense some of the horror of it and, Lord, we would put it far from us this very night and we would cease to be deceived by Satan that it's just a little bit of Bible study or a prayer we've missed. Just a little bit of a lie we told. Just a little bit of money that we took.

Lord, we would turn from it now and have nothing to do with the unclean thing. Lord, it will strangle us if we continue. Lord, we would put sin far from us and we would commit ourselves to

walking in outward conformity to your law and your will in act and thought and word. Now, Lord, this sinful nature, this heavy inbred sin that lies on our hearts and makes us bend towards disobeying you. Lord, we know that you have made provision for it on Calvary. Lord, we ask you to begin to bring us into this. Lord, we do not know even how to pray but, Lord, we would begin by asking you to show us where that sinful nature is in us. Lord, show us if there's any part of it that we really want and bring us, by your own law, and by your wooing love, bring us to the place where we are ready to have done with it and hate it as much as you do. Then, Lord, we know that when we truly want to do what you want us to do, you'll make our natures fit to do it by making real in us the destruction of that old nature that was crucified in Christ and giving us that new nature that was raised in him on resurrection day. Lord, thank you. We give ourselves to you for this purpose in these coming days to seek you with all our hearts. Amen.