

# Are you Perishing? The Reason for our Being

By Paris Reidhead\*

I am going to ask you to see several Scriptures this evening. We will begin by turning to Acts, Chapter 17:23. The Apostle Paul is in the city of Athens. He has spent several days as a tourist, but as a missionary becoming increasingly burdened by the people that are there needing to know the Lord whom He loved, and yet not finding an opportunity to minister to them. And so we find that there came just that opportunity as he had walked that morning up the road that many of us tourists had taken. I rode up in it actually in a van or bus, walked up that road, and the Acropolis, and noticed that all along the way there were altars and shrines. And finally he said,

“As I passed by and beheld your devotion, I found an altar with this inscription: To the unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, that haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Act. 17:23-31).

And it is this last phrase, this last verse really, the last clause of the 30th verse, that I wish to bring to your attention tonight: “But now God commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

We must see two things tonight. First, *we must see that sin is a crime*. I do not believe that I need to labor this point with you. I do think that you understand that we cannot view sin as a congenital disease, something we have inherited from our parents alone, and see simply this aspect of it, and then recognize that God is going to judge it. People are pitied when they inherit a disease. They are not judged as criminals. If one inherits a disease of some venereal type, why the consequence is deformity and all the anguish that it brings, and the person is to be pitied. So with any kind of sickness. Now if sin is just this, then of course we have actually made God to be a monster by thinking and teaching that He is going to judge people for committing the crime of not doing what they could not help doing. You see the fallacy of this? If this is all it is? Now we recognize that we inherited from Adam dispositions in nature and traits and tendency, a fallen nature. And we came into the world depraved. But that which gives to sin the character of transgression, and gives it this criminal aspect is the fact that at age of accountability we were prepared to endorse this and submit to it, and thus to make it the ruling principle of our life. And what was a bent, or a tendency, or disposition, or a nature, now became an avowed policy. And this, in spite of all the warnings of conscience, this in spite of all the entreaties of His Word, this in spite of all the commandments that He has given, in spite of everything God could do by the gracious Holy Spirit working in every means He could, nevertheless we endorsed the crime of our parents, consented to it, and said, This is going to be the operational principle of our life.

Now we understand of course that this is that which is going to be faced in the day when the unsaved stand before Christ. They will stand before Him, not at the place of which we are speaking tonight, the Bema, but God has appointed the day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, and the world includes all men, and God has therefore commanded all men to repent. And so we would say at the outset, The criminal aspect of sin must be met at the cross. You either come there, repenting of your sin, acknowledging the justice of God’s condemnation, receiving Christ as Lord and as Savior, and with receiving Him receiving pardon and deliverance. Or, one refuses to do that. And the alternative of that of course is not to escape from Christ, because God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world. Therefore there will be an occasion when the people who

reject Christ in time will meet Christ in Tribunal. The Lord Jesus Christ has set a time in which all who spurned Him will meet Him. This judgment scene is described in the Book of Revelation as The Great White Throne, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be there on the Throne in such glory and such splendor that when individuals who are to face Him at that point see Him, they are going to be filled with a sense of their overwhelming guilt and His infinite righteousness and the justice of His condemnation, and they are going to cry for the mountains and the rocks to cover them and hide them from the face of the wrath of the Lamb.

Now this scene is described in detail, because it is the occasion when those who have spurned Him and rejected Him must meet Him face to face. This is the Great White Throne. Bear that in mind. It is not to be confused with the occasion and the place when the redeemed shall meet the Lord. Now obviously these are perishing.

The word perish has engaged my thought a great deal in the last few weeks. I have dwelt on it several places where I have spoken, no later than last night in a banquet ministry in New Jersey. This was the total burden of message, that the God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish. Too often we think of perishing as being the lake of fire on the left hand of the Great White Throne into which these that are judged, whose names have not been written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be forced to go. It is that. But perishing is much more complete than that.

I think that we must understand that the word actually has as its semantic intent the idea of failing of intended use. An illustration I have used from behind this desk and many places comes out of our experience in Florida. There we lived in Orlando, just a little to the north of the Winter Garden area, near Lake Okeechobee, there in those peat bogs and mud flats, where they had taken at great expense this useless land, drained it, and put it into garden vegetables. It is wonderful to drive by and see a field of celery in January no less, when up in New Jersey the snow is banked up against your front door you are down there, and here is a great field of lettuce and there are tomatoes. You wonder why anybody lives north of the Georgia border after you have spent a few weeks in Florida. Really when there is room enough to pitch another tent, you wonder why anybody resides anywhere else. But they do nonetheless. But it is quite thrilling to me.

One occasion when a friend who managed a packing plant lived at Belle Glade, Florida, invited me to go out and see the packing plant. Well I was impressed. We went out near the field. Here was a tractor with a wide spread at the end of it. And the workers would follow behind the tractor. I think it was head lettuce that they were picking, and they would cut it off, sort of sort it there. Some they would throw in the ground. Another was not quite ready. But that which was ready they would cut off and put on the belt. And apparently it went on this conveyor belt until actually (the ice was in a truck) and I gathered from what was being done that most of the operation of packing was done right there in the field, or at least a great deal of it. And so then we went to the packing plant where we saw the celery being cared for, and finally watched them put these cases of green vegetables into the refrigerated car, packing them with ice. He said, "When they are in Florida we have to keep them cool. When they are up in New Jersey we have to keep them warm." And as they had locked the car they took a stenciled cardboard and a gun, a little staple gun; a man went over and across the door he put a staple in here and another there, and a couple more to hold it from blowing off. And do you know what was on that little card? One word: PERISHABLE. Do you know what this meant?

I suppose some of you would say, Well they were going to send it up to New Jersey, and then it was going to be spoiled when it got to New York, and they were going to feed it to the swine out there in the flats in Secaucus. Is that what they were planning to do with it? Is that what it was intended for? They might have done that, but that was not what it was intended for. And all of those farms along there, down along the lowlands, out here west of New York (they have used a great deal of that) but I want you to know this, that this was not their destination. This was not the purpose. They were not shipping this up to New York for that reason. It was intended to arrive in good condition, to be taken down to the option mart to be sold, to be picked up by the wholesaler and then to the retailer, and then you would go into the store and there in January you would find celery and lettuce and carrots, and all the things that you desired and needed. But they all had come up under the label of PERISHABLE. Now you could have bought that and left it in the car overnight, instead of taking it into the house and it would have frozen in spite of everything they did. Or you might have just left it in the refrigerator until it was rubbery and dehydrated and you would look at it and say, Oh, this isn't any good. I forgot all about that. And so, in spite of all the work in Florida of draining the

land, fertilizing the field, irrigating, protecting from frost, harvesting, crating, it gets home to your house, and you have paid for it, and you are just indifferent to its value, leave it there that it is good for nothing but to be thrown away. And so, in spite of all the cost, it has perished.

What does perishing mean? I think you gather the meaning out of this description; to perish means to fail of intended use, to fail of intended purpose, to be wasted. And when the Word says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish," it is not that they should go to the destination of the lake of fire (Joh. 3:16). This is truly one of the consequences, but the essence of the word perish is, fail of the reason for its being, the reason for its intended purpose.

Now let us ask ourselves again. What is the intended purpose of man? And until we understand the intended purpose of man we cannot understand the enormity of the crime of sin. God's intended purpose for the human being was that man might be the object of His love, and thus fulfill God's eternal purpose and plan, to have someone like Himself with whom He could share all that He is and all that He has, and all that He is doing. He wanted man to be the object of His love, to fulfill all of His good and gracious purpose to have someone—from before creation, God filled the universe with His own presence and nothing else was here but God, God Himself in His tri-unity, occupied the empty universe, and then He purposed to have someone like Himself, with whom He could share Himself. So He began to spangle the empty space with galaxies and constellations, and planets, and then the place where he would make this one that He was to use, make in His image and likeness, man. And there was the point where all came to focus, all the angels, the cherubim, the seraphim had been created to be servants. All of the galaxies of stars and planets that are there in this unmeasured universe were but the playground and the field of activity of the man that He making in His ultimate fulfillment and perfection and glory. And He finally had prepared everything and said, It is time now for the crowning purpose, "Let us make man in our image and in our likeness" (Gen 1:26). And thus all of His ancient and eternal longing came to focus in getting for Himself a beloved. As bridegroom, He wanted a bride. As father, He wanted children. As Son, He wanted brethren. He wanted someone like Himself whom He could love, and with whom He could just go into partnership with all that He had planned and all that He had intended.

And thus man will never know what was intended by God in making a human being until he is in that right relationship with God. To perish, therefore, is to fail of intended use, to fail of the reason for our being, the purpose for our existence. This is the colossal waste, as we look out on the mission field. And I remember villages in Africa where I went. What is the thing which is most oppressive and overwhelming about it? It is that there were people living their lives in all the stress and strains and interests and adjustments and occupations that would be necessary to survive and yet there with all the success they have in adjusting to their environment in surviving century after century, they are perishing in terms of their failing of the reason for their being.

When you go into the streets of the great cities of the world, and acquaint yourself with the continents and their peoples, and when you look in our own city, our own mission field at our door, what ought to be your reaction? Is it just that these people are going to go to hell? This I think is far too shortsighted, or long sighted, perhaps I should say. We are seeing much less than we ought to see. What is in this human being? Here is a woman, here is a man, here is a young man or woman, and they do not know the Lord Jesus Christ; what is happening? Well they are eating, because apparently they are being sustained and not starving to death, wearing clothes. They are being protected from the elements. We assume they have a place to sleep. What is the great deception that Satan has succeeded in putting into the mind of this young man or woman, whoever the person may be, Mr. and Mrs. X? What has happened? This individual has been deceived by the god of this world into thinking that the end of being is just the continuance of being. So they get up early in the morning, and then go in extreme pain and discomfort on the subway or some other metropolitan means of transportation to the place of work. They engage in work which they do not find particularly challenging or delightful. They are not really there, because out of all the things in all the world this was what they wanted to do and found the happiest. They are there, because, well, it's a job, isn't it? And they get a salary, don't they? So they work hard all day so that they will survive to get home on the subway at night, and they eat a good supper and then relax so that they can sleep well. Why? So that in the morning they can get up and have a hearty breakfast to go back to the subway. So that they can go back to the same place of work where they weren't very happy yesterday, and they aren't going to be too much happier today. So that they can work real hard so that they can pay the rent, because Saturday is coming,

so that they will have a place to sleep and a place to eat and clothes to wear, so that they can work next week to get some more money, so that they will still have a place to eat and clothes to wear, and a place to sleep. So the end of life is the continuance of life.

And Satan has succeeded in deluding our generation and all generations into thinking that life is in itself sufficiently precious and valuable to be continued for its own sake. But you see, man is made for infinitely more than this. Man wasn't made just to be an oyster, sort of clinging to a rock, and there surviving through one tide after another. There is infinitely more invested in man. And yet Satan's great delusion was to try and convince man that simply having food to eat, things with which to play, clothes to wear, a place to sleep, and the certainty that one would not ever have to change the mode of eating, sleeping, and of dressing to which they have become accustomed was in itself sufficient reason for existence. And of course if one would even read the Book of Ecclesiastes they would discover that an intelligent man using his reflective powers had explored this to its ultimate end and concluded that if this was the whole end of being then it was vanity of vanities. It was not worth the effort.

Now I am not a pessimist, and I am not trying to be a fundamentalistic negativist and simply say, Well I am not happy and nobody else is. That is not it at all. I do not want to say that people cannot have sensations of pleasure, and the people cannot have certain experiences and satisfactions and delight away from Christ and outside the pale of our theological interest. I do not want to suggest that. But I do want to say that when a person has finished a course of working and eating and sleeping, and working and eating and sleeping, and dressing, and gone through the motions and looks back over a life and says, What have I done it for? and they are now standing on the threshold of eternity, there is real reason for pessimism and dark foreboding. And if we are to understand the thoughts of the present day philosophers as they have written them and expressed them, we are discovering that they are beginning to say, It is hardly worth the effort. Well now I do not believe that at all, because I believe that any means to survive until one can come to the reason for his existence. But the reason for your existence is not to continue your existence.

And of course there has been another effort where Satan has been successful. He has said something like this, Oh sure, become a Christian, believe the Bible. Because, if you believe the Bible, then God becomes a wonderful adjunct to this round. He will help you get a better job so you won't have to work so many hours and you can live better. So believe, and have faith, and trust, because God becomes a celestial bellboy that will do a lot of the work for you and will tide you over a lot of the difficult places. And then God becomes a means to an end. So Satan has now gone into the business of commending God. Oh, if we can see and discover that even this stops short of what the Bible sets forth as the reason for our being.

What is it? Well I'll tell you it is difficult for anyone to put into words that which is so apparent, but the fact is that God made us for Himself and He carved into us this vast empty space that only He can fill, and He made us so that nothing can satisfy us but God. He made us so that nothing in the world can complete us but Himself. And He made us so that when we are brought into a right relationship with Him and are completed by Him and in Him and with Him that life becomes gloriously worth living. No one really understands the dignity and the nobility and the glory and the wonder of being a human being until he is in a right, full, proper, normal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, because then he is completed, then he is whole, then he is fulfilled. And if God is just a means to escape final punishment and perishing is thought of simply out there at the end, that one isn't going to have to go into the left hand into the Lake of Fire, but the right hand into Paradise, well then what about all these days? what about all these years from the time we come to meet Christ? Well they have perished. They have been wasted. Even though we do go to Heaven when we die, what happened while we were alive? Do you see? Why Heaven is to begin on earth. There isn't to be that great a difference. The transition wasn't to be that dramatic. We have had an idea that everything is going to be different when we die. No, you are going to be the same kind of person afterward that you were before. It says, "And when Judas went out and hanged himself and he went to his own place" (Mat. 27:5). Well what do you mean? Why he was the same kind of being after he was hanged as he was before, identically the same. He just went to his own place. He went to the kind of place to which people like him went. And when he got there he found that he was with his own kind. Moral gravitation pulled him there. There was not any great change, one way or the other by death. He was the same when he died as he was before. And so it is that when you die you are going to be substantially what you were at the time.

I do not know what process God is going to have to bring us to the place of maturity after death. I have not any insight as to that. But I do know He is vastly interested in bringing us to maturity while we are alive. And you have this year, this year just past, this week just past, today, has perished, has been wasted unless you have been living today, this past week, this past month, this past year as God intended you to live it, in full fellowship with Himself. And so we have two aspects of perishing that final ultimate destination to which the rebels will go because they have refused to be complete, they have refused to experience the joy and the fulfillment that God intended for them. And so they will go to their own place because sin is not only this matter of a nature. It is also a crime. God has an appropriate place for such. But here what I am concerned about is you, myself.

You came to know the Lord Jesus Christ some years ago. You were brought out of the dire, dark threat of judgment because of your past crimes into the light of forgiveness and pardon through faith in the finished work of Christ, and you said, I'm saved. I was saved six years ago. Well what does saved mean? Well saved means to be delivered from perishing. And so if you are saved then that means that you have come to the place where you have had fulfilled in you the reason for your being. We use the word saved as referring to our destination instead of to our present walk in relationship. Let me ask you. Were you saved today from being wasted today? Or did you live today with your intellect filled with thoughts about God, your mind recalling the theology of God, the truths concerning Him, and even your will committed to certain conduct that became one who knew God. Or have you been living today in fellowship with Him? Have you been living in Ephesians the 3rd Chapter today? Have you been walking in the fullness of the Spirit today? Have you been experiencing this joy and delight? Well now, look. If you have been less than that today you perished. Or shall I say today perished. Today was wasted. Today was squandered. Today failed of its purpose. God wanted Heaven to begin on earth. God wanted glory to burst into your soul.

NOW. Pitiful is it that we waste our lives, wishing it away. Do you do that? I have suffered from this for years; years and years I have suffered from it, wishing it away. I remember when I was on the farm I could hardly wait to get out of High School, wishing to get into Bible School. When I was in Bible School I wished it away, just willed it away, you know, because I wanted to get out into the ministry. And so all my life it has been sort of running up hill; today was to be just endured because of some delights of tomorrow. But when you get into that tomorrow, tomorrow is of the same nature as yesterday was, and so you have got to keep — the will o' the wisp that the next tomorrow is going to be better than today. Do you see what I mean? I suppose this is an American trait. I do not know. But at any rate it is something from which some of us suffer. And the consequence of that is a tendency to let the precious NOW slip by. We are going to be better when we go to that Bible Conference next summer. We are going to become spiritual next year. If we can just survive until next New Year's Eve when we make a new commitment to the Lord, then 1963 isn't going to have the failure we are finding in 1962. Do you live like that at all? Do you find that tendency? Well. I do. I do. And do you know? God has shown me that every day I have lived that way has perished, has just been wasted, failed of its being.

This is what we are going to do when we stand before Jesus Christ. We are going to give an account of the days that have been wasted. We are going to give an account of the days that have perished, the energies, the strength, the years, and the vital force of our being that we just poured like water on the ground, and oh what a pathetic, tragic thing it is going to be when we stand before Him at the Bema. It is not the question of the destination, the Lake of Fire, or Heaven. That was settled at the Cross. We are going to stand before the Bema to give an account of the deeds we have done in the body, whether they were good or bad. We are going to stand before Him to tell whether or not, since we were pardoned, since we were brought out of death into life, we have lived our lives to endure for His praise, or they have been wasted, they have perished.

This is why it is going to be tried by fire. This is why it is said, It is gold, silver and precious stones over against "wood and hay and stubble" (I Cor. 3:12). May I just break this analogy down. I cannot defend this exegetically, but I think it illustrates. The gold and the silver and the precious stones are the days, the hours and the minutes. The gold of the day, and the silver of the hour, and the precious stones of the minute that you have lived in that full, warm, *vital fellowship with the living God*, where He has been free to be in you and live through you as He has wished, that this is the gold and the silver and the precious stone. And the "wood and the hay and the stubble" are the months and the weeks and the days that you have lived in your own energy, your own strength, your own purpose, your own personality. And everything that flows out of us perishing, it is wasted. And everything that comes from Him is enduring. So what do we find? Well this is it. We find that God has a wonderful

plan in grace to undo the effects of sin. I said, originally when He made us He made us to be the objects of His love, to share all that He is, and all that He has, and all that He wants to do. And now in grace through the Lord Jesus Christ He is going to undo all of the sad, miserable consequences of sin.

Well how is this to be effected? Well, the Lord Jesus (and this is the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity, as compared with all other religions) — All other ethical religious systems, all rather ceremonial religious systems, all other religions have the teacher or the god, or the deity or the idol, whoever it might be, whoever communicated with the people, speaking for the deity say, If you do this perhaps the god that we are representing may be pleased with you and take pity on you, at some distant time. All other religions have God saying to man, Do and perhaps. And Christianity puts it right around. In Christianity, God says, I know you. I know your crimes. I know your sin. I know your heart. And I know that you cannot atone for your sin. There is nothing you can do. And so I am going to come down and do for you what you cannot do for yourself. And so in Christianity you have God doing for man what man cannot do for himself.

Well this is to deal with the past. And all other religions have God, the God—whichever it is—, instructing the people to do something that perhaps God may...But in Christianity it is just reversed: I know you cannot. So I will do for you what you cannot do.

But then there is something else. It isn't that He just does this about the past and says, Now I know your nature. I know your temperament. I know your traits. I know your weakness. I know all about you. And so I am going to do this. I am not even asking you now that you have been pardoned and forgiven through My death to live the kind of life I want. You see I did not make you for that. I did not make you to do what I want done. I did not make you to do that for Me. What I did was to come in such a relationship that I could do in you that which was well pleasing. Do you see the difference? Christianity is altogether other, totally different.

Now he is going to perish who does not see that when Jesus Christ died He died for him, and if he rejects the death of Christ and spurns the offer of His mercy and ignores His proffered grace, then he certainly will have as his destination that place of his own where moral gravitation will pull him, that place of darkness on the left hand, the Bible calls Hell. But what about you? What about you that have received His death for your sins, but you have never received Him for your life, and so you have been living since you were pardoned for the past in your own energy, in your own strength, and in so doing it has been but "wood and hay and stubble." Days have become weeks, and weeks have become months, and they have all been lived on the level of human energy expended in what is thought to be a good direction, and that day we will see it will be perishable. First, because God's plan was not just to pardon you of the past and then say, Now get busy and do the thing that is utterly contrary to your nature to do. He did not say that. He said, Look, you can no more live the life of the present and the future than you could deliver yourself from the past. And I am not asking you to do the impossible. I am asking you to let Me do the natural. I'm asking you to recognize that if you will be to Me a channel, be to Me a vehicle, I will be to you life and energy and power.

And so what is going to happen? One day you are going to have to stand before Him and give an account of whether or not the days since you were pardoned have been saved or wasted, whether they have perished or have endured. This is what I want you to see tonight, this is what God wants you to see. You see we make this a matter of option so much. We say, Well it is just a matter of up to me whether... I know you have talked about the Spirit-filled life and the Christ life. Well leave that for the eager. As far as I am concerned. But oh, one day we are going to stand before Him at the Bema. We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; for everyone must give an account of the deeds he has done in the body. This is so clear here in II Corinthians, Chapter 5, vs 10-11a: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;..." Here is the exhortation that the apostle makes. Why do you want another day to perish? Why do you want another day to be wasted, and another day to be joined to still another day, until it becomes a week, and a week joined to another week until it becomes a month, and a month joined to another month until it becomes a year. And all this time you have been insured against hell, and there has been no fear of going into the pit. But all this time has been wasted and has perished.

And “God loved the world and gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him” should not be wasted. But your life is made up of time. And so God wants tomorrow to be saved, just as He wants these people out here that are squandering their life, that never will know if they go the way they are now what it is to be a human being. He wants them to be saved, because He loved them. And He wants you to be saved. He does not want you to be squandered and wasted, does not want that life tomorrow to be lived in your energy, because it is just “wood, hay, and stubble.” The best you can do.

Oh, if tonight you would say, Look, I am going to give an account to Jesus Christ of tomorrow, and I am going into Monday, and Monday to Tuesday, and Tuesday to Wednesday, and all week. And I know from the past that I am not adequate for the moment. Oh, how can I morally and spiritually and ethically and properly represent Christ. I have tried to imitate Christ. That does not work. I’ve tried to hold the thought that I must love, but that doesn’t work. O Lord Jesus, there is only one way. You must live your life in me. You must fill me with Yourself, or else tomorrow is going to be joined to all the “wood, hay and stubble” days of the past, and going to be wasted, will perish. You won’t, but the day will. Your life is made up of days, and the Lord Jesus will be robbed of glory and honor and praise. Do you want it to perish? You are going to give an account of it. What kind of a day was today? What kind of a day will tomorrow be? Because you know, in that day when you stand before Jesus Christ, you are going to give an account of April 9, 1962: What you say, your attitudes, thoughts, your decisions, and your steps. It is going to come out just the same...You see it is as though God were photographing and putting sound track, as though it were—I do not understand it, but—this fantastic television tape, where they take a machine that puts it on electrical impulses like a tape, and then play it on the television equipment and it comes out a picture. Do you understand it? I do not, but I know this that in that day when we stand before the Bema, the Judgment Seat of Christ, I fully expect to have both vision and sound of April 9, 1962. We are going to stand to give an account. The only way that tomorrow can be anything less than “wood and hay and stubble,” is for the Lord Jesus Christ to be given the liberty of living His life in you and all your circumstances and needs and pressures, and this is what He wants to do.

You know, the amazing thing about it is that this is called the rest of the saints, for he that has entered into rest has ceased from his own labor. And He is doing the work and you are getting the credit, and He is getting the glory. Now look. Here is a company of people. I haven’t counted. I will know a little after the benediction how many were here. You know there are enough people right here tonight to change New York for Jesus Christ, if you would just allow Him to live in you and live through you His own life. That is right. Or are we going to waste tomorrow? and is it going to perish? and are we going to give an account to Him in that day? or are we going to allow the blessed Son of God to have His way and live His life? Well, I do not know now. But we will know, because we must all appear before the Bema, the Judgment Seat of Christ, and give an account for April 9, 1962. What kind of a day will it be? What kind of day has it been? What kind of a day will it be? The kind of a day it will be is determined by who lives in you. If you do, “wood, hay and stubble;” if He does, “Gold, silver and precious stones” (I Cor. 3:12). And at the Bema you are going to give an account. Why don’t you right now say, O Lord Jesus, I’m inadequate. I can’t. I don’t know, but You can and You do know. Be in me, and be unto me, and be through me everything that I am not. And then at that day, April 9, 1962 will be to the praise of the glory of His grace. This is all He asks. Shall we pray.

Father, what a tragic thing it is to come unprepared before Thy presence. We think of unsaved ones that may be with us, that will go out of time and into eternity, never having savingly embraced the Son of God, and Thou hast used the word perish of them, ultimately and eternally fail of their reason for being, must be put in the refuse pit of time and eternity, where those that have been unreconstructable and unredeemable are placed because they have chosen their own place. Then, Father, for us that have tasted of Thy grace, have learned that we could not atone for our past sins, and yet have been so reluctant and so slow about learning that we cannot any more effectively live to the glory and praise of Jesus Christ by our own energy, and have been willing to go on day after day in failure rather than frankly to admit that we cannot, and to release the Lord Jesus to be to us, and in us, and through us what He only can be. We ask Thee, our Heavenly Father, for the sake of our Lord, for His glory and His praise, for the witness to others as we walk and move and minister that Thou wilt find in the hearts of this people a glad echo of the entreaty and exaltation of the evening, and that everyone here will say, Lord Jesus, I know I am not adequate, but Thou art. Be to me my wisdom. Be to me patience in the irritating situation. Be to me strength. Live in me and release Thine own grace and understanding. O Lord Jesus, live Thy life in me that Thy Name may be glorified through me. We believe this is the release Thou art asking for, and that from step to step, and moment to moment Thou wilt give victory if we

will but allow Thee. So seal the Word, the truth to our hearts, and help us to take courage that however often, how many other days we have begun this way and failed before the day was through to go with clear hearts and confidence into tomorrow, knowing that Thou wilt strengthen us and help us to stand. And we will give Thee praise for Thy blessing to our hearts. We love Thee, Lord Jesus. We thank Thee for Thy grace to us. We ask that Thou wilt just make Thyself wonderfully real to this people. And may tomorrow and the week be a glorious week because Thy presence has been more real and full in us than before. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Let us stand. If there is need for you to stay for prayer or counsel, I will be so happy to stay with you. Why don't you just speak to me at the door. Remain seated where you are and we can come and talk and pray together.

Now, our Father, be with us as we part. Thou knowest the homes to which each of us will retire. Grant that we may seek Thy face. Grant, Lord, that blessing of Father, Son and Holy Spirit shall be and abide upon each one that has been present. Speak to us in the night seasons. Make tomorrow a good day. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

\* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Evening, April 8, 1962 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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