

Restoring the Creator's Image

#0551

Study given by W.D. Frazee—July 18, 1964

That will be a wonderful day when heaven comes down to earth and God lives with men, won't it! And the most wonderful thing about it is the restoration of the image of God in humanity, but we're told in that closing chapter of the Bible:

"And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads" Revelation 22:4.

God's name—His nature—will be fully revealed in the human family. Now, this is the theme of the whole Bible. In the beginning, man was made how? In God's image. That's the message of the first chapter of the Bible. The message of the last chapter is a restored humanity, once more bearing the image of its Creator. And all that lies between in these thousands of years of conflict and struggle—they're all designed in the plan of God to bring about that restoration.

Now, it is that restoration that the message of Revelation 14 is focused on—that's its purpose is to put the finishing touches on the restoration of man in the image of God in this last generation. For this last generation, dear friends, is to have a special proving, a special testing, as to whether the image of God *can* be reproduced in humanity or not.

Those who go through the time of trouble that's just ahead will be tested and tried by Satan in every possible way. They are witnesses for God in this world demonstrating for the universe, before the universe, that God's law can be kept and that the image of God *can* be reproduced in humanity.

You may be sure that God is not going to allow that time of trouble to break until He, shall I say, has His job done. That's why we've been waiting—or rather, God has been waiting now 120 years since the judgment hour struck.

God will never allow that test to come until He knows that His people are ready, until He can put and has put His seal upon them, as those that reflect the image of Jesus fully. And so, since all heaven is interested in this, I'm sure you and I are interested in it this morning, aren't we?

Let's note again that message which we've been studying this week beginning with the 6th verse of the 14th chapter of Revelation:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice..." Revelation 14:6-7.

All together:

“...Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters”
Revelation 14:7.

Again, this morning I would like to notice, especially, that expression:

“...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” Revelation 14:7.

Worship the Creator. Now, as we have noted, to worship Him intelligently, we must be acquainted with what He made, what He made. To say that a man is a watchmaker means very little to me unless I know something about a watch. Is that right? Yes.

And if I am to worship God as Creator, I must have some acquaintance with what He created—all nature, the world, the birds, the flowers, the trees, and of course, most important of all in this world, man himself. And it necessarily follows, therefore, that the better acquainted I am with what He made, the more intelligently I can worship Him. Is that right?

Every scientist, then, should be more devout because of his scientific knowledge. Now, unfortunately, that isn't always true and the Bible explains the reason for that. The very fact that in the world today most scientists believe in evolution is, in a sense, a very strange phenomenon, because studying the natural world ought to lead men to a knowledge of the Creator. And Paul tells us in Romans 1:20 that even the heathen are without excuse because the character of God, his attributes, are revealed through the things that He has made.

But, as I say, the fact that nearly all the scientists today believe in something which is exactly contrary to creation, shows that the human mind unaided by the Spirit of God is not sufficient to arrive at truth. If we want truth, we'll have to have the Author of truth as our teacher.

We've invited Him to be our teacher this morning. I'm sure He's here ready to lead us into the deep things of God. Let's open the windows of our souls heavenward and let the rays of light, the streams of glory from the Heavenly Sanctuary, pour into our minds and hearts this morning.

And, therefore and thereby:

“...worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” Revelation 14:7.

Worship the Creator. Now, as we've been noting, to worship Him involves not only that we understand what He has made but that we like the way He makes things. These gods that the Greeks and Romans worshipped—even if I thought they

were gods, I must say honestly I couldn't worship them. What is there to admire about them?

Elder **Moat** was telling us about a great god that he visited over in the Orient. A great Buddha, lying reclined, and it was so large that you had to climb up on a stairway to get up to see it on top, and there was a man up there shouting in the ear of that god. Poor fellow. He wanted something. There are gods among the heathen, you know, where the suppliants will even whip them at times to try to get attention.

Well, I thank God that we are dealing with the Creator, not only One who is powerful but One whom, when we get acquainted with Him, we admire Him. We don't feel like whipping Him. We admire Him.

And I ask again this question, which I trust will challenge us—do you really like the way God makes things? Do you? Do you like the way He makes things? Well, that will be revealed in what we do. For I submit to you, friends, that if we like the way He makes things, we'll try to keep them the way He made them. Is that right?

If somebody gives me a beautiful painting, and the next time they come to see me, they see I've had it done all over, that it hardly looks like what they gave me. They'd have doubts as to my appreciation of the artist—the original artist. Wouldn't they, friends? Yes, yes.

Did you ever see anybody made up, made over? There's a name that's used—makeup. Isn't there? Yes. Well, dear friends, it isn't only in that field of human experience. In every field of human experience, we are either cooperating with the Creator in seeking to maintain and restore the Creator's image. Or else we are cooperating with the great enemy, who is seeking to pervert, to destroy, the Creator's image. That's the whole theme of the Bible.

I referred last night to a statement in *Volume 6*. I brought it with me this morning. I want to read it to you. It's *Volume 6*, 186:

"The God of nature is perpetually at work...The same God who guides the planets works in the fruit orchard and in the vegetable garden" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6*, page 186.

Is God at work in this world? Yes.

"[He] works in the fruit orchard and in the vegetable garden. He never made a thorn, a thistle, or a tare" *Ibid.*

What's a tare? A weed. God didn't make weeds? No. God didn't make thorns? No. He didn't.

"These are Satan's work, the result of degeneration, introduced by him among the precious things..." *Ibid.*

Think of it, friends. Jesus taught that in the parable of the wheat and the tares. The servants came to the master, and they said, Master, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Yes.

“...from whence then hath it tares” Matthew 13:27.

What was the answer?

“...An enemy hath done this” Matthew 13:28.

And every time we see something cruel, something useless, something ugly, in this world, whether it's out in the wilds or in the city, whether it's in birds, flowers, trees, or whether it's in human nature—I say, whenever we see anything ugly or cruel or wicked or useless, let us remember, friends, that's the work of the enemy. That's the work of the enemy, and he should be given credit for all of it.

But, says one, “I didn't think Satan could create.”

No, he can't. Everything that's created is good. That's why Paul says what he says in 1 Timothy, the fourth chapter. But, ah, friends, although Satan can't create, he's a wonderful perverter. He can't pull things up, but he can drag them down. He can't improve them, but he can certainly do the opposite. And he's been working on that now for 6,000 years, and he's just about ready to reveal his finished product, and it isn't pretty.

And one difficulty is he's had so many helpers. All down through the ages, most human beings have worked with Satan to make man sink lower and lower and lower. Isn't it too bad, friends? Yes. Even though Adam and Eve sinned and fell terribly, every generation we are told has witnessed a successive fall of man.

Why? Because nearly everything that man does—you study it, you'll agree with me—nearly everything that man does works in one way or another to deface, to deform, to destroy, the image of God.

Well, you can readily see, then, that if we're ever going to have that image restored, there has to be something introduced into human life which will be entirely different. That's the Gospel. That's the plan of salvation, and that, in its application to this generation, is the three-fold message of Revelation 14. That's the everlasting gospel that the angel is preaching.

But now, friends, let me ask you something. If, as I have just mentioned, and it's true and you know it's true—if the world is going the way of deforming and defacing and destroying the image of God, what will the plan of salvation have to be as far as its relation to ordinary human life is concerned? Do you see it will have to cut right across it? Do you see it'll have to be something entirely different?

And that's why that the third angel's message, as it approaches the problems of life, deals with them in an entirely different way, whether it's a matter of diet or dress or music or reading or recreation or association or TV or radio or literature or

education or any other subject. The whole purpose of life as influenced by the third angel's message is entirely different.

It is for one purpose and one purpose only. It is to restore the image of God in humanity. That's what it's for. And anything that will contribute to that, we want. Anything which will not contribute to it, we haven't time for. And anything which would divert from it, anything which would oppose it, anything which would make it impossible—that, my friends, we think is dangerous. Do you agree with me?

Oh, the Lord grant that the eyes of our understanding may be opened, that our discerning faculties may be quickened, that we may see, for around us is a world filled with snares, and the wise man says:

“Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird”
Proverbs 1:17.

In other words, it takes a cleverly concealed snare to catch birds and animals, but the enemy is more than a match for your mind and mine, my brother. And whether we go to the field of science or the field of amusement, to the world of diet or the world of education, to the philosophies of child training or anything in life, the enemy has his snares concealed here, there and yonder.

But thank God for the:

“...sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn...” 2 Peter 1:19.

God grant that this light of prophecy may guide us safely through this night. What do you say, friends?

Now, here is something very interesting about this matter of the image of God in humanity. We're all clear that man was made in the image of God in the beginning. Thank God, we don't have to trace our ancestry back to a line of apes and mammals and on down through the slime of the prehistoric ooze. No, nothing of that kind.

Man was made in the image of God and God made him in a day from dust. Is that right? Is that what the Bible says? Yes. Genesis 2:7:

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground...” Genesis 2:7.

Now, as we noted last night—let me review this point for it's vital to our study this morning. When God took that clay, with the elements that compose the human body, and you who have had scientific training know that the elements that are in the human body are in the clay—the iron, the calcium, the phosphorus, the sodium, the potassium, and so forth. When God took those elements in the clay and molded them in the shape of man, in God's own image, He thereby exalted matter to the highest point possible.

Think on that. There is no higher point that matter can be exalted to than to be shaped in the image of its Creator. But God did more than that. He gave to that man shaped in His image the power to choose whether to retain that image or not. What is the greatest exercise of that power? Would it not be to recognize both the wisdom and the goodness of God in making that mass of matter in His own image, and saying, I like that. I'll work with you to keep it. Wouldn't it?

And my dear friends, what would you say of an attitude of mind or a choice of the will that would say, "I don't like that. I don't like the way you made me, and I'm going to do everything I can to change it." Isn't that the greatest insult that could be hurled at the Creator, friends?

Look at the way Paul puts it here in Romans, the 9th chapter. Turn to that, for I want you to get it from the inspired page, as well as through the ear. In Romans, the 9th chapter, verse 20. I repeat, friends, this is the greatest insult that can be hurled against the Creator:

"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?
Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast
thou made me thus?" Romans 9:20.

Ah, God keep us from any such attitude. What do you say?

Now, even in Eden, man had a work to do in cooperation with God. He was to dress the garden and to what? Keep it. Adam's work was to cooperate with God in maintaining the beauty of that which God had created. Is that right?

When sin entered, man's work was increased, for all kinds of difficulties had been introduced. Thorns and thistles sprung up as Satan perverted the original creation. And so God said to Adam, "Adam, you're going to have to work hard to keep ahead of those tares and thorns." And as we said last night, I know that he didn't get them all because their descendants are around us today. Everywhere I go, I see some thorns and tares. Don't you? Yes.

But listen. Every time we work with God in the garden to get rid of the thorns and tares, *if* we know what we're doing, we're getting a spiritual experience in working with God to restore the beauty of the original creation.

And so, it's written here in *Volume 6*, in this same thing that I was reading from a moment ago:

"So when the students employ their time and strength in
agricultural work, in heaven it is said of them, Ye 'are
laborers together with God' 1 Corinthians 3:9" *Testimonies
for the Church, Volume 6*, page 186.

Now, I want to ask you something. If God is interested enough in maintaining and restoring the beauty of the original creation, that He actually is happy to have us go out in the garden and cultivate the flowers and the fruits and the vegetables and get rid of the thorns. I say, if He's interested enough in that restoration that He's

happy when we do that, what shall we say of His joy when we cooperate with Him in restoring the beauty of *this* creation—the human body, the human mind, the human soul. That’s the thing that’s very dear to Him—so precious, that He gave His only Son that that work might be accomplished.

And remember, friends, Calvary did not establish the value of man. That value was established at creation, when God made man in His image. It was *because* of the value that was already in man when he was created that Jesus could do nothing less than give His life to redeem man.

Jesus looked at man—and even in his fall, Jesus looked at him and said, “Oh, man, you are so valuable to me, so precious to me, that I will give my own life to redeem you, to build back that image which you’ve lost, you are so precious to me.”

Ah, friends, surely the glory of creation and the love of Calvary should unite to cause us to want to work *with* Him in the restoration of what was lost. What do you say, friends?

Now, just as we must work with God in the vegetable garden and in the fruit orchard, so we are to work with God in the restoration of the image of God in humanity. And may I say, frankly, that this is what a lot of people don’t understand, and I wish you’d just think it through with me for just a little while.

When God made man in the beginning, what part did man have in it? Nothing at all. And that’s some people’s idea of the plan of salvation today. Man has no part in it at all. God does it all. And I’m sure there are statements which, wrested from their setting, isolated from their context, will give people a foundation to base such ideas upon.

But, my dear friends, there is an essential difference between the re-creation and the original creation, and that difference makes all the difference in the world. And that’s this, man had nothing to say about his original creation. He had no part in it whatsoever. He found himself perfect, formed in the image of his Creator, and he had not had one single, solitary thing to do with it. Am I correct? Yes. And I want to tell you something, friends. In this work of re-creation, we are laborers together with God.

Now, I know that we can’t do it without Him—we’re just as helpless as the leper was that knelt at the feet of Jesus, but just as we cannot do it without Him, He will not do it without us. That choice—oh, mark the point—that choice which God put in man in the beginning and which man used to insult his Creator, by saying, “I don’t like you and I’m going to work to destroy what you created.” That choice must, in the great plan of God, be reenlisted on the side of God and must day by day cooperate with God in saying, “Lord, I like your way and I choose that that way shall be worked out in me.”

But that calls for a program of education, for if all my life I’ve liked something which is tearing me down and dragging me down, what can happen to me, dear friends, to change that? Suppose that I not only like it but I think it’s good for me.

Like the good man I got acquainted with once—his wife was getting ready for baptism. And in the course of conversation in his home he told me one day—he said, “You know, Mr. Frazee,” he said, “If you could prove to me from the Bible that tobacco wasn’t the thing for me to do,” he said, “I’d quit it.” He says, “you know, really I think that it’s good for me.” He says, “I think it’s helped to preserve my teeth.” He had a good set of teeth, so he said, “Tobacco is good for me.”

Now, what could you do with a man like that? What do you say? Why couldn’t God work a miracle for him? Yes. That would be an interesting chore to assign God to, wouldn’t it? To take all the people in this world with filthy habits, unhealthful habits, wicked habits, habits that drag man down, and say, Now, Lord, here they all are—the millions, the billions. Just speak the word now and change them and transform them so that they never like what is wrong and they always like what is good.

I wonder why God doesn’t do that. Solve a lot of problems, wouldn’t it? Yes, but, it would take us back to the original problem and at the infinite cost of Calvary. God solved the problem when He made this world, He wrote into the very foundation of this world, the provision of Calvary. When He gave man a choice, He knew that it would cost Calvary.

But, friends, it’s going to be worth it when the restoration is accomplished:

- when man intelligently chooses to accept the Creator’s way,
- when man intelligently chooses to admire the Creator and His handiwork,
- when man intelligently chooses to eat in God’s way,
- to dress in God’s way,
- to enjoy amusement, reading, music, of God’s choosing,
- to have education in God’s way, to have a family life in God’s way,
- to have everything in life like the Creator planned; like He has told us through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, and to do it because we love Him and because we love His way.

That’s no bondage. That’s the greatest liberty. And, friends, it’s going to be. Look at Romans, the 8th chapter and the 29th verse:

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son...” Romans 8:29.

Did God know us before this world was made? Yes. Then He predestinated us. Now, predestination, you know, is quite a theological problem. I’m not a theologian and I won’t get into that problem. Friends, to me, it’s very simple. I got a letter here the other day from a friend of mine a thousand miles away. You know why? It was predestinated—the letter was. The destination was written right on the letter, and that’s why I got it.

Did you ever get one like that? Friends, every letter you ever got was predestinated. The destination was written on it before it got there. Right? That’s why it got there. Listen, before this world was ever made God wrote your destination on you.

Now, you have something that the letter doesn't have. You have a choice as to whether you'll cooperate and reach the destination. But, listen—that doesn't change the fact that God in His love and wonderful wisdom and power—He planned, He predestinated, you to be conformed to the image of His Son.

What does conform mean? Made like it. Wouldn't you like to be like God? Wouldn't you like to look like God, act like God, think like God, love like God, enjoy like God? Ah, friends, you can. That's your destiny. It's for that you were born. Everything in this universe is to help you reach that glorious destination. Let's do it. What do you say, friends?

But, remember, after Eden had been lost and Adam was out there working, what did he have to do? Watch this point. When he was there with his hoe, he had to look at a plant and see whether it was a weed or a flower, whether it was a tare or some food-making plant, right? And today it's a lot more complicated than it was in Adam's day, I can assure you. We have to think in every phase of life, Is this a weed to be hoed out or is it a plant to be cultivated and encouraged. Is that right? Yes.

You know, it isn't enough just to say, Well, this is natural. It must be good. Tobacco is an herb, isn't it? Coffee's an herb, isn't it? Tea is an herb, isn't it? Coffee and tea and tobacco—they didn't come from some laboratory that put a lot of chemicals together and made a poison. Oh, no.

The great scientist, Lucifer, in his vast laboratories of this world, has studied the secrets of nature and has worked to make nicotine and caffeine and a thousand other poisons which are natural, if by natural you mean that they come from nature. They're not natural in the edenic sense, friends.

So, just because a thing is natural doesn't mean that it will help you to restore the image of God. No. Do you see we must have discernment? Well, only the Holy Spirit can teach us.

Now, my next point—and don't miss this—if that's true even in the world of nature, if I can't eat everything that grows saying, This is natural. It must be good for me—if that's true in the world of nature, what shall we say in the world of human invention?

Can I read every book that's written and published? I'd better not, friends. Can't anyway, but oh, my, many of them are either going to lead directly against the Creator's plan or be so full of that which is trivial and useless and unessential that it will divert my mind from the one job of restoring the Creator's image. Correct?

And take it all the way down through. Do you see how in every phase of life, if I'm working with the Creator to restore what was lost, I must have my senses alert to discern what's a weed and what's wheat, what's a thorn and what's a flower.

Oh, somebody says, "Well, I can tell that easy."

Can you, friends? Can you?

Listen. Over there in Africa where you used to labor, Elder Vixey, I've seen pictures of some of those natives with the lower lip that protrudes one or two inches out in the front. What happened? Well, when they're young, they make a slit in that lower lip and put in a piece of board, small at first. They keep putting in a bigger piece of board till finally the lip—way out—duck bill. Maybe you've seen them. You've seen them. Yes.

They look beautiful, don't they, elder? Don't they? Do they think so? Yes. Oh, but you don't think so. No, no. We do things different over here, don't we? Yes. There are various ways in different races, different nations, different generations, of working on the human body and the human mind to deface the image of God, and before we get too critical or even condescending toward those poor African natives, let's ask ourselves this simple question. Is everything we're doing in dress helping to restore the image of God? Is it helping us to look more like what God intended us to look like?

And so, in diet and music and reading and everything else. If we have a TV, when we turn to the channel, let's ask ourselves, Now, is the program on this channel this evening—is it going to help to restore the image of God in me? If it is, I'd better turn it on, for I need all the help I can get. Right? If it isn't, I'd better not, for I don't need any hindrances. I've got enough inside without adding any. What about you? Yes.

And friends, is it by beholding that we become changed? That's right. Then, when I look at that program or when I listen to it over TV or on the radio, if I read it in the magazine or see it on the screen, and whether I see it in a theater or an auditorium, that moving picture—it moves people all right, doesn't it, friends, it moves them.

My question is this. Is it something that is going to help me restore the image of God in my soul or is it something that's going to tear me down and deface and deform and mar the image of God? One or the other it will do, right?

Now, turn, please, to the 17th Psalm. I want you to see a beautiful verse that shows what the true quest of life is and what the only thing that can satisfy is—this is it, friends—to accomplish this work of the plan of salvation, to bring man back to the perfection in which he was created so that, looking upon us, God can see His image reflected fully, and looking upon Him, we can see One that we love in every way because He has made us like Him. Psalm 17:15:

“As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness” Psalm 17:15.

And I want to tell you, friends, nothing else *will* satisfy and nothing less *can* satisfy. God made you for Himself. He made you to be like Himself. And just as the prodigal son never found real satisfaction till he came home, you and I can never find true joy, true happiness, true satisfaction, until the thing we were made for is accomplished, and we are re-created fully in the image of our Creator.

Now, Brother and Sister Foote and Brother Foote's sister are going to sing for us at this time the message of this closing text:

"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" Psalm 17:17.

And I want to tell you something, friends. To this last generation is given a wonderful privilege. I don't mean that it couldn't have been before, but I mean it *is* going to be this time, and that is, those who welcome the Savior at His coming are going to be like Him right here in this world before they see Him.

When He appears, we shall be like Him, but oh, to live through the time of trouble and demonstrate a likeness to Him here in this flesh, and thus bring joy to His heart and glory to His name throughout the universe.

[Singing.]

When I shall awake in that fair morn of morns,
After whose dawning never night returns
And with whose bright glory day eternal burns,
I shall be satisfied then.

I shall be satisfied then.
I shall be satisfied then.
When I shall awake in that fair morn of morns,
I shall be satisfied then.

O soon I shall gaze upon the face of Him,
Pierced to redeem me from the curse of sin,
And praise Him forever with the glad new hymn,
I shall be satisfied then.

I shall be satisfied then.
I shall be satisfied then.
When I shall awake in that fair morn of morns,
I shall be satisfied then.

And when I shall see His glory face to face,
Hear His glad welcome, feel His fond embrace,
And feast on the fullness of His heavenly grace,
I shall be satisfied then.

I shall be satisfied then.
I shall be satisfied then.
When I shall awake, in that fair morn of morns,
I shall be satisfied then.

~I Shall be Satisfied (with modifications)

Thank the Lord. There's somebody here this morning that's going to get more help in these last three minutes than all the rest. Listen. You might be the person. There's somebody here whose heart is thinking thoughts like these. "Yes, I see. I see some things, but I'll tell you. I'm confused because there are so many different ideas on these points."

Let me make it very simple for you, friends, very simple. Jesus has given you just one pattern and that's Himself. He's given you only one judge, and that's Himself, speaking to your heart by His Holy Spirit. Don't become confused by what somebody else thinks you ought to do in diet or dress or music or reading or education or anything else. If you do, you *will* be confused. Don't let that trouble you two seconds.

Just come to God like a little child and say, Dear Jesus, there's a lot I don't know, but there's one thing I do know. I want to be like you, and I want your image to be restored in me. Dear Jesus, teach me what's a weed to cut out and what's a flower to cultivate, and then do it. That's all, friends. That's all.

Yes, but, you say, "But other people"—bless their hearts, friends, if you wait for other people, eternity won't be long enough. To every such confused heart, Jesus says, as He said to Peter who asked about John:

“...what shall this man do?... what is that to thee? follow thou Me.” John 21:21-22.

Will we do it, friends? Will we do it? I'd like to ask you a question this morning. How many of you in your heart—you really believe that God's way is a good way and you'd like to be like Him. May I see your hands. Do you? Well, all right. Let's tell Him that every morning anew. What do you say?

Let's study what he's given us in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to find out what His way is, and then let's just do what He leads our hearts to do day by day and be happy in the glorious thought that soon—and oh, it's soon, bless God—we shall be like Him whom we love and long to be like.

Shall we stand? We're going to have prayer now as we close this service. If there's somebody here this morning whose heart is crying out for a special blessing and you'd like to come right up here to the altar and be prayed for especially as we close, you come right now.

We won't sing, but if there's somebody whose heart is crying out for a special blessing and you long to press real close to God and receive the blessing that your heart is hungry for, just come right up here and we'll pray for you especially and I know God will hear. He says He will. He says:

“Come unto Me... and I will give you rest” Matthew 11:28.

God bless you, my brother. Just stand right here now with bowed head. Is there somebody else?

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee this Sabbath morning for meeting with us, and we thank Thee for the glorious view of the glorious goal. We thank Thee that before you made this world you planned for us to be like you. And Lord, the more we see of Thy beautiful character, the more we wonder and adore and we worship Him that made us, made this universe.

We're sorry that we've done so much to lose that image, so much to deface, to deform, to destroy, the image of God in our bodies, our minds, our souls. Forgive us, Lord.

And oh, this morning, we're coming asking for the miracle of conversion that changes our hearts and minds. We're asking for the grace of God that will enable us to live out what Thou dost put into our souls. We're asking that just now Thou will give us such love for Thee that we shall from this moment walk close to Thy side and work with Thee to cut out the weeds in our characters and to build up the precious graces of the character of God.

Bless each seeking one this morning and fill their hearts with an abundant blessing that overflows. Dismiss us all now with Thy blessing and bring us back tonight to learn more of these precious things, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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